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# SECRET DOCTRINE OF THE GITA

(BASED ON NAVRANG'S)
GITA RAHASYA



Dr. B.P. Bajpat

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#### THE MYSTERY OF KRISHNA

"The Supreme Personality of Godhood is Krishna. He eternally abides in His blissful spiritual form. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin, and He is the prime cause of all causes."

Brahma-Sanhita (5. 1.)

"It is said that Krishna never goes out of Vrindavan, Vrindavan parityajya na padam gacchati.—He is more supreme in Dvaraka, and He is most supreme in Vrindavan. Krishna's pastimes in Dvaraka are displayed by his Vasudeva's portion, yet there is no difference between the Vasudeva-portion manifested in Mathura and Dvaraka and the original manifestation of Krishna at Vrindavan," says Swami Bhaktivedanta, the founder of Hare Krishna Movement in the West.

But, Navrang Swami says, there is a vast difference between the three portions that manifested in Krishna and that is why the Bhagavata appositely observes that the original Krishna, the most Supreme one, never goes out of Vrindavan. How? To explain it, the present book is offered to the reader.

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# SECRET DOCTRINE OF THE GITA

(A collection of the verses from the Gita and the Gita-Rahasya of Navrang Swami)

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To

The Readers

in commemoration

of

the third centenary of

Mahamati Prannath

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## FOREWORD

Although born over 300 years back, Mahamati Prannath and his contemporary disciple Navrang Swami have begun to appear most relevant to the present Indian society, which has after long years of slumber newly awakened to its social and cultural problems and is trying to evolve the instruments with which it can solve them. Their system of thought offers a basic solution to the serious problems challenging our society as also all theologies and philosophies of the world. Hence the thinkers who recognised these problems and took cudgels against them when they were in their incipient stage, deserve all the recognition and admiration for their invaluable contributions.

Mahamati Prannath's teachings have relevance and importance for the modern age for one distinct reason, namely, his synthesis of the secret doctrines of all religions. A synthesis of this nature has never been attempted by any other thinker. While great saints have seen essential unity in all religions, they have shown this unity mostly in their moral precepts like the ten commandments of Moses and the ten characteristics of duty (Dharma-lakshanas) as advocated by Manu. Apart from this, they have also shown unity in their structure. For instance, all religions have three common values, those of knowledge, devotion and virtue, corresponding to the three aspects of human psyche, viz, cognition, emotion and action. All of them have their sacred books and prophets, their forms of worship and their principles of conduct including high ideals of moral action and sacrifice. The seeming differences of all these aspects are reconciled on the basis of different places and times in which the various religions were propagated in different languages by different prophets. Nevertheless, this synthesis does not go deep into the inner systems of spiritual experience, which is felt as unique by every seer and is therefore presented as something peculiar and a special privilege of his own religion which can be attained by its followers alone. This residue of unreconciled faith bestows a certain pride in one's own religion and a prejudice against others, which ultimately keep

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the religions of the world divided in spite of vehement enunciation of unity.

It was given to Mahamati Prannath to attack this seed of disunity (Bheda) and establish complete unity (Abheda) by reconciling the deeper systems of religious experience, first by delving into and experiencing directly the inner truths of several religions himself and then by propounding his experience for others in the language of the common man. Space does not permit going into his exposition in detail. Suffice it to point out, as just one illustration, his description of the Hindu Raslila of Krishna and Gopies and the Muslim Meraj of prophet Mohammad, wherein he brings out the hitherto unknown experience that the two culminations of the ascent of man towards God are reached by the same path which offers the same strange experiences at the different stages of the pilgrim's progress. By this great contribution Mahamati has played a historic role in the development of human unity. World peace is unthinkable without this consummation of human unity in all its comprehensiveness and depth.

Mahamati Prannath's metaphysics is complicated by theoretical as well as terminological difficulties. The central question of the Ultimate Reality being formless or formed is handled in a peculiar way. It seems that Shri Prannath believes that the Ultimate Reality is neither formless nor formed. His reasons are that all things with form have their end and the formless is nothingness. And how can a thing which is nothing have bliss which is one of the attributes of the Asolute? Therefore, the Ultimate Reality is neither formed nor formless and is over and above both. In the final analysis Shri Prannath's Absolute is metaform which pervades both form and formlessness and at the same time transcends them.

Navrang Swami, the great Indian scholar of the seventeenth century and a direct disciple of Mahamati Prannath was himself a spiritual genius. With his high erudition and deep experience, he wrote over two dozens of books, out of which the Gita-Rahasya is in the grand tradition of the stalwarts in the exposition of the doctrines of the Bhagavad Gita—the great canon of Hindu Philosophy. The present interpretation of Navrang Swami is based on the Philosophy and mystic experience of Mahamati Prannath confirmed through his own; this is the speciality of this treatise,

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Out of all the best known commentaries of the Bhagvad Gita, that of Jnaneshwar alone goes into its mystic aspect and that is based on the orthodox system of Yoga which is considered the most direct way of attaining Godhood. But Navrang Swami, following Prannath, does not give much importance to the technical methods of Yoga. Instead, he emphasizes most the devotional path of attainment. Such devotion is strengthened by knowledge and is gained by the study of scriptures, particularly Mahamati Prannath's writings, as they communiate the direct experience of the seer. Other expositions of these originals are relevant so far as they are backed by the teacher's own experience as in the case of the present work. Such exposition is further helpful in as much as it simplifies the abstruse originals and puts them in current language different from the language of the originals.

Navrang Swami's poetic exposition of the Bhagavad Gita does not follow the text, chapter by chapter and verse by verse, but encompasses the whole cannon by way of clarifying and simplifying its philosophy in one sweep. Dr. Buddhi Prakash Bajpai has made a selection of the important verses of the Bhagavad Gita and written his own commentary on them closely following the ideas of Navrang Swami who is profusely quoted to prove his point. This way Dr. Bajpai's work is original in its own way and is extremely readable, because it does not bother the reader with too many foot-notes. The reader can slip over the text undisturbedly and smoothly, enjoying the happy language and style of this erudite and polished writer. I am confident his work will be appreciated by scholars and devotees alike.

Prof. Raja Ram Shastri Vice-Chancellor, Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi. Vinay Avasthi Sahib Bhuvan Vani Trust Donations

# AUTHOR'S PREFACE

There are many good translations of the Gita and several good commentaries of it. The commentators speak to us from experience and express in a new synthesis, a synthesis they could arrive at by reconciling the wisdom of as many scriptures as they could lay their hands on. All great doctrines are coloured by the reflections of the multifold scriptures as bear the imprint on the individual who reconciles them and happens to realise the true meaning imbedded in them.

There is a monument erected at Kurukshetra to pay tribute to the devout labours of various commentators of this book. A temple dedicated to the Bhagavad Gita is today found in that holy place. It was the actual spot on which this immortal utterance was made by Lord Krishna. In that temple are enshrined as many as three hundred commentaries on the Gita, belonging to different periods of time.

In this treatise an attempt is made to present the viewpoint of Mahamati Prannath and his famous disciple Navrang Swami, the writer of the Gita Rahasya. Mahamati Prannath, born about 350 years ago in the year 1618 in Gujarat, had conceived of a World-Religion in which the scriptures of all religions could be integrated to present a synthetic approach of Reality. To this profound seer truth represented not merely any sect of Hinduism but religion as such, in its universality, without limit of time and space, embracing within its synthesis the whole gamut of the human spirit, from the crude fetishism of the savage to the divine message revealed to the prophets from time to time.

Actually this book is not the whole of the Gita but a subject-wise grouping of some of the texts of the Gita alongwith the couplets of the Gita-Rahasya. The English rendering of Navrang Swami's couplets is, however, not literal. As a matter of fact, he himself wrote his "Gita Rahasya" not as literal translation of the texts of the Gita, but to highlight only the gist of the Gita laying bare the mystery hidden in it. Naturally, it became a difficult task to locate

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the exact corresponding texts from the Gita matching the couplets of Navrang Swami. After giving the exact translation of the texts of the Gita, comments are given in the second paragraph to throw light on their interpretation in the couplets of Navrang Swami.

The traditional commentators have their own style, with paraphrases, references, etymologies, digression and what not, put side by side with their explanatory sentences. All that makes the commentary somewhat forbidding to the ordinary readers. Perhaps this must have been the principal reason for Navrang Swami in writing a condensed rendering of the Gita in Hindi, of course, of three centuries back.

Sanskrit is quite an easy language for Indians, its apparent difficulty is the intricacy of the compound words. Hence the compound words are separated out, so that the readers with a preliminary acquaintance with Sanskrit can also understand the meaning that flows from those words.

The Gita is a dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna and when conversation was in progress, all the topics could not be discussed in their entirety and hence the teachings of Krishna got scattered throughout the book. If these scattered texts of similar references on a particular topic are grouped together with a new sequence, the treatment of the entire topic becomes not only exhaustive but also crystal clear in its meaning demanding no further explanation on it.

When this has been done in this book, surprisingly the new meaning, hitherto rot looked into the Gita, have begun to emerge. Navrang Swami has written his "Gita Rahasya" to] focus them to our attention. He observes that the Gita is a book of hidden treasure of spiritual knowledge. The greatest secrets, the Guhyatamam Rahasya are locked in it and only a very few enlightened souls (Tattvadarshi) could have access to it.

Krishna has told Arjuna that this wisdom of the Gita was once upon a time given to Sun and it came down from him to Manu, Ikshavaku and a few others from one generation to another till it was lost in the great lapse of time and was now renewed for Arjuna. Navrang adds that the wisdom was again lost from Arjuna

onwards and is renewed by his master Mahamati Prannath in a new perspective. Accordingly, an attempt is made in this book to put forth briefly the highlights of that mystery as unearthed in the "Gita-Rahasya" of Navrang Swami.

Shri Lokmanya Tilak has also made a good attempt in this direction in his own "Gita-Rahasya". To him as well as many others, the secret of the Gita consisted in the supremacy of the path of Nishkama Karma Yoga (desireless action) over all other paths. Navrang's "Gita-Rahasya" has, however, a lot of other secrets to be communicated to the readers, such as the secret of the three Purushas and the three kinds of souls, the monotheistic approach to the life, the true meaning of the Sadhana of exclusive devotion, and the like. A brief treatment of these hitherto unrevealed points is given in the Introduction of the book for a cursory glance of the readers.

The object of the Gita entails the comprehension of five basic truths. First of all is the science of Supreme God and second is the constitutional position of the living entities, i.e., the souls. Third is World-Soul, Ishvara controlling the destinies of the infinite souls and enacting the drama of creation. Fourth, there is a hierarchy of servitude in this creation i.e., every living being serving the other: the animals to men and men to gods and smaller gods to higher divinities. Fifth, in order to shake off the inferior mode of existence there are multiple ways suited to one's temperament and conditions. The present book, therefore, deals all these basic truths classifying each in separate chapter and grouping together the concerned texts at one place.

The Gita is no stranger to the East or the West. But Navrang Swami, the author of the "Gita-Rahasya" is. The Mahabharat and the Ramayan are the classics of the Indian culture. The characters that figure in them have become so one with the lives of the Indian people that we can call the two epics as comprehensive treatises of the science of the Hindu society. The Mahabharat, in particular, describes human life as a fabric woven out of both black and white threads, in which the chapter of the Gita has been set in the middle like an elevated lamp to illumine the whole of that fabric of life.

That is why, the Gita has been accorded the status of an

## VII Decret Doctrine of the Gita

Upanishad, i.e., the crowning portion of the Vedas. The earliest historical evidence in the world is provided by the Vedas. The divine wisdom which was but a seed in the Vedas grew and became a tree and yielded at last the sweet fruit of the Gita. The Gita, therefore, comes to us as the twice-distilled essence of the Vedas, drawing the milk of all of them. Navrang Swami condenses this further in his "Gita-Rahasya" and brings to the fore the hidden mystery of this treasure-house of knowledge. To him Arjuna is only an excuse and the songs celestial were sung by Lord Krishna for the searching souls to come.

The first English rendering of the Gita was done by the East India Company. Warren Hastings, the then Governor-General, had contributed a foreword to it, in which he had stated: "These writings of the inhabitants of India will survive when the British Dominion in India shall have long ceased to exist, and when the sources which it yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance."

It is manifest from these remarks that even those who once considered the inhabitants of India very primitive in their ways of living, however, acknowledged the germs of thought hidden in this civilisation to be of universal importance to the intelligentsia of all times to come.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The author initially received an inspiration from Mr. K. K. Mehta and Mrs. Vimla Mehta for writing a book in English, presenting the philosophical doctrines of Mahamati Prannath in conformity with the scriptures. The author is therefore very grateful to them who not only provided their initial inspiration but also kept on offering their valuable suggestions till the writing of the last page of the book. The author also owes his deepest gratitude to the eminent commentators of the Gita, namely Tilak, Radhakrishnan, Chinmayanand, Vinoba, Aurobindo, and Rajneesh whose writings proved of immense help in developing ideas on many a subject in this book. The writings of Pt. Krishna Dutta Shastri and Pt. Vanshi Dhar Shastri have provided enough Slokas to prove our point and Shri Shyam Behari Dubey has taken enough pains to make many remarkable hints. Their assistance is heartily acknowledged.

#### **NAVRANG SWAM!**

(Life and Philosophy)

Navrang Swami, who bore in childhood the gay name of Mukund Das was considered to be the gift of Krishna to his parents. His parents Shri Raghava and Smt. Kunvar Bai lived at Surat. They were very pious devotees of the Bhakti cult of Krishna. It is said that for a long time they had had no issue and unmindful of it they worshipped Balmukunda Krishna with single-minded devotion. Once they received a visitation from Lord Krishna who blessed them with his 'Darshan' saying that soon they would have a son who would spread His divine message to the four corners of the world. Thus was foreshadowed the marvellous power manifested later by him, a genius for unveiling the secrets of the mysteries of Krishna's message to the whole world.

The blessings of the Lord bore fruit and the child whom the world was to know as Navrang Swami was born in the year 1648, followed by another son Murari Lal after three years. Nobody imagined-himself least of all- what infinite spaces, what tremendous depths lay hidden in the little boy, Mukund Das. Both the brothers grew up with good grounding in the Shastras. But Mukund Das soon became Mukund Swami, at the early age of twenty five after receiving the initiation from Mahamati Prannath. No sooner did Mukund Swami's worldly dream shatter upon his realisation of Tartamya-Inana than he found that he was actually a 'Navrang Soul,' i. e. a soul of creativity of the eternal abode of Lord Krishna (Akshara-tita Brahman) and had descended to the world of dream for a relish of its illusory nature. Therefore, he came to be known later as Navrang Swami and always accompanied his Guru Prannath. Thus he devoted his life in fulfilling his Guru's mission of awakening the dreaming souls of the abode of the Supreme.

The seventeenth century which could be called the darkest period of the Indian history under the rule of the bigot Aurangzeb had the privilege of giving birth to the greatest soul of human history, later known as Mahamati Prannath for preaching a new gospel of unity of all religions and shake off the dust of all religions with their paralysing formatism. Suprisingly, a small town Panna of Madhya Pradesh

became the venue of the preachings of such a genius who foreshadowed the marvellous power in gravitating the people from all parts of the country. For, his gospel was open to all men and women of all religions and all castes as brothers, and even to those without caste. Muslims, Hindus, beggars, thieves, fanatics, prostitutes and the oppressed all came together to listen to his burning message and join his fold of collective living in Panna. In no time his fold of disciples spread throughout the country from Gujarat to Assam and Nepal. They went from village to village, conversing and dancing to the tune of their Master's message, the wandering Bride seeking the loving souls of the Supreme Brahman, Lord Krishna. Navrang also drank the milk of this Vaishnavite music, and it is true to say that he himself became the masterpiece, his own life its most beautiful Divine Melody to sing Krishna's songs celestial once again.

There were the mad men of the Vedas, controlled by the single word AUM. There were those Vedantis who renounced everything and were convulsed with laughter, crying bravo to the illusive world of Maya. There were naked men living with the dogs on beggars' scraps; there were the mystic and drunken bands of Tantrikas. Young Navrang observed them all with a watchful and anxious eye, and with a mixture of repulsion and fascination. He proceeded along different lines. He went straight to the centre, to the Commander-in-chief of the unseen general Headquarters; for the Ultimate Reality he sought is transcendental. The common belief that every smallest deity, however of low status it might be, is a manifestation of the Supreme Reality did not confuse Navrang; he thought that even cats and dogs were also His manifestations and, in fact, essentially the same, yet none would like to offer his worship to them. So also he thought it would be a great slur on his spiritual awakening if he were to worship gods and demi-gods considering them to be the representative of the Supreme Lord. No woman of piety would offer herself to the representatives of her husband considering them to be their counterparts. Inspired by such reasoning of his Master he was attracted by Mahamati Prannath and ended by identifying himself with his mission.

Navrang Swami wrote a number of books of which nearly 23 are available at present, His Gita-Rahasya, Chhandogya Upanishad, CC-O. Nanaji Deshmukh Library, BJP, Jammu. An eGangoth Initiative

Lila Prakash, Sunder Sagar, Rasa Sagar, Guru Shisya Samvad, etc., have been published from Navtanpuri, Jamnagar. Among all his writings the Gita Rahasya occupies the unique place. In it not only is his doctrine expounded but it also represents the traditional exposition of the Gita-Bhasya after the pattern of the Acharyas. His scholastic erudition was such as to win many a pundit in discussion.

It is said that once Mahamati Prannath sent him for awakening some of the souls in Aurangabad. Shri Bhava Singh Hada was the king of the state. On the way in the town of Aurangabad he came across the chief priest of the state, Mahant Ramdas, with whom he had a great discussion on the deep philosophical ideas in the Gita, the Bhagvata and the other Shastras. The Mahant was taken aback since he had never thought of those subtleties. He was also non-plussed to see the profundity of knowledge of the Swami. On learning that the Swami desired to see the king, he was frightened of his esteemed position in the state. He took the Swami out of the city and assaulted him, hitting him on his back with his staff and finally warning him that if he stayed any further in the state his life would be in danger.

It was a challenge to Navrang's fearlessness. He, however, found out from another person that the king daily visited a nearby temple. He prepared a questionnaire on the controversial issues of the Shastras and, putting the questionnaire with a little sweet in a small bag of cloth, he handed it over to the king in that temple. The king was pleased to receive this new 'Prasad' from the Swami. He took it and perused the questionnaire with profound interest. Mahant Ramdas and other pundits were summoned the next day to suggest answers to those posing questions. But, surprisingly, none could answer them whereas Navrang Swami gave very satisfactory replies to the questions asked by them in their turn.

The king happily welcomed the Swami to stay in his kingdom and instruct him as well as his subjects further on true meaning of the scriptures. But as soon as the king asked the Mahant to receive him and make him comfortable in his Ashram, the Swami showed to the king the marks of beating on his bare back, saying that he was earlier welcomed by the Mahant in that way. The king was shocked to discover the despicable character of the Mahant and

dismissed him from his patronage. He offered his apology to the Swami for the brutal behaviour of the Mahant and received initiation from the Swami.

It was just one of the several incidents of the Swami's life whose mission was to accomplish the awakening of as many souls as he could seek in his short life of seventy years. At the behest of the king of Udaipur he spent the last days of his life in Udaipur enlightening the people there till the end of his life. He left his mortal coil on the auspicious day of Dashmi in the year 1718.

#### **PHILOSOPHY**

# 1. Doctrine of the Three Purushas (Persons):

The Gita speaks of the three Purushas or rather a triple status of the one Supreme Purusha as Kshara, Akshara and Purushottam, and then develops the thought of the Supreme, the Purusha higher than Akshara Brahman of the Veda. The word "Akshara Purusha" of the Gita has not been rightly interpreted in the past by many a commentator. Hence their failure in unravelling the knot, the Rahasya Guhyatamam, the highest secret of the Gita. Moreover, the interpretation of "Akshara" as Maya by Shankaracharya or as Jiva by other commentators is in contravention to the injunctions of the Brahma-sutras in which Badarayan avers plainly that the word "Akshara" of the Upanishads stands only for Brahman, since Brahman is the Reality which sustains the universe and rules it.\*

The very fact that Acharya Badarayan has had to clarify the meaning of "Akshara" as Brahman, evinces that even earlier than him the term was mis-interpreted by others. Surprisingly, even the commentators like Shankar, Ramanuja and others agree with this interpretation in their commentaries of the Brahma-sutras. But, while translating the Gita, being unknown to the mystery of the highest secret, they were at a loss to comprehend as to what could be the meaning of Krishna when he speaks of the two Purushas: Akshara and Uttam Purusha. The interpretation of Akshara as Maya or Jiva was the only wayout to explain the mystery of the two Purushas.

It seems this difficulty had ever since been confronting the earlier

अक्षरम्बरान्त घृतेः । सा च प्रशासनात् । (ब्रह्मसूत्र १/३/१०-११)

commentators of the Gita as well. The Purana Sanhita had known of this confusion of the scholars of the Gita and had therefore made it clear in regard to the true interpretation of the Purushas: "Kshara Purusha is Jiva and the universe combined. Those who explain Akshara as Jiva or Hiranya-garbha and Purushottam as higher than it are of little intelligence. For Kshara Purusha is extended upto Hiranya-garbha and Akshara is higher than it; Purushottam surpasses both the realities."1

Thus this extended universe is not all that Brahman is, there is an Eternal greater than it by which alone its existence is possible. Cosmos is not Brahman in all His utter reality but a single expression, a true but a minor motion of His being. Gita's Supreme Reality, says Navrang Swami, is something greater that the universal existence of Akshara, yet all universal and particular things are that Supreme Divine and nothing else. Therefore, on one hand, the Gita invites our attention to the divine manifestation in varying gradation in all the zones of the cosmos, on the other it lays stress on His supracosmic existence. For, otherwise the mind would miss its higher goal and remain turned towards the cosmic only and thus attached to some partial experience of the Divine in the cosmos.

Navrang Swami explains the subtle difference between Uttam Purusha and Akshara. He writes in his Rasa-Sagar:

The Supreme is the non-doer; Akshara is the doer. Creation is the manifestation of the doer; unattached to the deeds of the doer is the non-doer.8

The power of the Supreme is revealed in three ways: Being (Sat), Consciousness (Chit), and Bliss (Anand). He alone is the

पिण्ड ब्रह्मांड सहितं पुरुषः क्षर संज्ञकः। ٤. हिरण्यगर्भो जीवश्च पिंड ब्रह्मांड संस्थिती ।। क्टस्य अक्षरं तिद्घ वर्णयन्तीति वादिनः॥ तयोर्द्वयोः अतीतस्तु परमात्मा पुरुषोत्तमः । एवं संकुचित ज्ञाना वादिनो बहुघा जगुः॥ (पुराण संहिता-२३/२०,२२)

3:

अकरता अक्षर परे, करता अक्षर अंग। करे करावे अंग पे, अंगी आप असंग ॥

enjoyer of all the sports of these three forms of creativity.3

In His enjoyment of Bliss there is none other than He in His twin aspects of bliss and consciousness.4

The Being aspect of the Supreme is equipped with the power of Maya and is known as the Sabalik Brahman, i.e., Akshara. In its aspect of absolute consciousness (chit-ghan) the Supreme expresses Himself in manifold ways.<sup>5</sup>

Kshara, the creation of this universe is one of such ways.

#### 2. Monotheism:

Since all the gods are expressions of one Reality, people normally think that by worshipping any form of the Reality, they actually worship the Absolute Reality. But it is not so. Why to speak of gods, even all creatures are the expressions of the same Reality. Should one therefore worship rats and cats as the Absolute Reality? The Gita plainly states, in unequivocal terms, that worship of deities other than the Supreme Purusha with the understanding that they are the manifestations of one Supreme is "Avidhipurvak" i.e. not accordance to the rules. (8/23). Moreover upto Brahma-loka all the lokas of the gods are perishable, therefore the worshippers of the gods attain to these perishable lokas and return to creation. Only when one worships Purushottam, one reaches the eternal abode from where none returns again (8/16). There are also several other scriptures forbidding the Moksha-desirous persons from indulging in the worship of multi-deities:

1. Only the sinners of the previous birth regard Vishnu instead of the Absolute Himself as the highest deity.

₹.	सत चिद आनन्द शक्तिको, भोक्ता अंगी एक।
	लीला पुरुषोत्तम पिऊकी, नित नौतन रंग देख ॥
٧.	अखण्डानन्द एक रस में, दिव्य ब्रह्मपुर माहें।
	उत्तम पुरुष अंगी अंग बिन, और दूजो कोई नाहें।।
y.	है शुद्ध सत सरुप को, सबलिक सत् स्वभाव।
	चेतनधन है ब्रह्म सो, अनेक हैं इनके भाव।।
	(रस सागर, ३/४, ११, १३)
<b>\(\xi_{\cdot}\)</b>	महापापवतां पुंसा पूर्वजन्मसु सुन्नता :।
	विष्णुः सर्वाधिको भाति न साक्षात् परमेश्वर ॥
	(गरुड पुराण, यज्ञवैभव खण्ड अ० २/५८)

- 2. No other Bhakta is so dear to Me as the one devoted exclusive to Me. On account of ignorance people are engaged in the worship of other Devas. But such multi-god-worshippers can never be My devotees, much as the unfaithful wife reaches never the higher plane of her husband. I dislike the spirit of devotion of a prostituting mind.
- 3. In the Bhagvata Purana (2.3.10) the king Parikshit makes an enquiry of the sage Shukadeva as to which god the thoughtful men should worship. The sage replies that it would differ from person to person in accordance to the basic desires each may harbour. But for those who seek liberation the worship of only the Supreme Purusha with intense devotion is prescribed.
- 4. The Sankhya system of philosophy acknowledges the gradual purification of mind by worship of the five deities: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Sun and Ganesh; but it also remarks that one cannot attain knowledge by such worship. The commentator Vijnana-bhikshu says that since these Devas are the manifested forms of the Mahat-tattva, they are not the point of no-return for the souls who attain to them.
- 5. At one place in the Veda it is also stated that every god is eager to receive worship from men. From their side they always try to increase the number of their followers and do not like when their following diminishes. Though some of them, themselves,

७. अनन्यभक्ति सदृशं नान्यत् प्रियतमं मम ।
न जानन्ति नरामूढाः किं देवैः सेवितं सुखम् ॥
न भक्ता भक्तिमन्तोऽपि येऽन्यदेवाचंने रताः
यथा स्त्री कुलटां मूढा न याति पति लोकताम् ।
व्यभिचार परोधमों न मे तोषाय कल्पते ।

**E**.

(आदि पुराण, अ० २६)

अकामः सर्वकामो व मोक्षकाम उदार धीः। तीत्रेण भक्तियोगेन यजेत पुरुषं परम्।।

(भाग० २/३/१०)

९. अध्यस्तह्मप उपासनात् पारम्पयण यञ्जोपासकानमिव।
इतरलाभेऽपि व्यावृत्तः पंचाग्नियोगतो जन्म श्रुतेः ।।

(सांख्य दर्शन ४/२१-२२)

are engaged in the worship of one Supreme, yet they would not like their followers to do so and thus lose them. Whosoever worships another divinity thinking 'He is one and I another', he is like a sacrificial animal for the gods. Verily, indeed, as many animals would be of service to a man, even so each single person is of service to the gods. If even one animal is taken away, it is not pleasant, what, then, if many? Therefore it is not pleasing to gods that men should know Brahman.<sup>10</sup>

The Gita, as a matter of fact, is a revolt in the Hinduism against the polytheism. This may perhaps be one of the reasons why Mahamati Prannath has been able to synthesize the teachings of the Gita and the Bhagvata with those of the Quran and the Bible, since both the Islam and the Christianity were, like the Gita, conceived in revolt against the polytheism of the Arabian and the Western world. In this way, he paved the way to establishing the One World-religion.

Navrang Swami states that even the Vedas which are full of polytheistic references, in their totality and essence, evolve the concept of one Absolute and monotheistic ideology in the Purusha Suktas, Nasadiya Suktas and the Upanishadic portion though with their limited knowledge, thus:

He created Pran
After Pran was created faith and five elements
And mind, senses, food grains
From food sexual energy and spiritual endeavour
And action, higher worlds and their names,
Pippalad said that he could know Brahman-this much and not

beyond this.

१०. अथ यो अन्यां देवतां उपास्ते अन्यो असावन्यौ ।
अहं स्मीति न स वेद यथा पशुरेवं स देवानाम् ।
यथा ह वै बहवः पशवो मनुष्यं भुंज्युः एवं एकैकः पुरुषो देवान्
भुनक्त्येक् अस्मिन्नेव पशावादीयतन्न प्रियं यदेतन् मनुष्य विद्युः ।
(यजुर्वेद, वृहदारण्यक, १-४-१०)

११. स प्राणं असूजत प्राणात् श्रद्धां खं वायुः जयोतिः आपः पृथ्वी इन्द्रियं मनः अन्न अन्नात वीर्यं तपो मंत्राः कर्म लोका लोकेषु च नाम च । तन्होवाच एतावत् एवाह एतत् परमं ब्रहम् वेद । नातः परमस्तीति ॥ (अथर्ववेद प्रक्नो० ६/४, ७)

Who knows this really and who will now declare
What paths lead together to the gods?
Only the lowest aspects of the existence of those are seen
That exist on Supreme mystical planes.<sup>12</sup>

What will he do with the Vedic Mantra Who does not know even Akshara, The Supreme region in which the gods dwell? But those who have known that

Are contented in all respects.<sup>18</sup>
From Akshara innumerable worlds rise and fall.
One who transcends all the worldly forms,
One who pervades inside and outside the world,
One who is without beginning, without Pran and mind,
And one who is pure in every respect,
Is the Supreme Purusha Divine
Who is really beyond Akshara.<sup>14</sup>

From Him arose sacred wisdom, From Him arose the highest Brahman (i. e. Akshara) From Him arose all the gods With life that lasts.<sup>15</sup>

१२. की अद्धा वेद क इह प्रवोचद् देवां अच्छा पथ्या ३ का समिति । ददृश्र एवां अवम् आ सदांसि परेषु या गुह्येषु व्रतेषु ॥ (ऋ०३/५४/५)

१३. ऋचो अक्षरे परमे व्योमन् यस्मिन देवा अधि विश्वे निषेदु:। यस्तन्न वेद किर्म ऋचा करिष्यित य इत् तद् विदुस् त इमे समासते।। (ऋ० १/१६४/३९)

१४. तथा अक्षरात् विविधाः सोम्यभावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापियन्ति । दिन्यो हि अमूर्तः पुरुषः सबाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुम्रो हि अक्षरात् परतः पर. ।। (अ० मुण्डक, १-१-१-२)

१५. तस्मात् जातं ब्राह्मणं ब्रह्म ज्येष्ठं देवाश्च सर्वे अमृतेन साकम् ।। (अ० ११/५/५)

Who really knows, and who can declare—
From where has it sprung and whence came this creation?
And whether the gods appeared with its production?
Who really knows whence all this has arisen?
He who speaks of the creation in the great Akshara,
He truly knows it or perhaps he also knows it not. 16

#### 3. The Philosophy of Avatarhood

If the Supreme Reality is manifested in infinite existences throughout time, then its special manifestation at one given moment and through the assumption of one single human form is but the free fulfilment of that same movement. If man can be made in the image of God, God can also express His absolute mode of being in and through man. An Avatar is therefore a descent of God's power into man and not an assent of man into God which is the case with the liberated souls. To those who are apt to take Avatarhood at the best for a mere figure for some high manifestation of human spiritual power, Krishna Himself says that the ignorant know not of the mystery of the Divine lodged in the human body since they are grossly subject to the mechanistic thinking of the material world.

In the evolutionary process the secret divinity hidden within matter and soul evolves and breaks through the seals of the assumed ignorance. But what the Gita wants to tell us is not by evolution or ascent like the ordinary Jiva and not even by growing into the divine birth, but by a direct descent into Krishna's human form so that souls may see what that is and take courage to grow into it. It is to give a spiritual mould of Brahmic consciousness into which the seeking soul of the human being can cast himself.

"I am Vasudeva among the Vrishnis", says Krishna, "Arjuna among the Pandavas, Vyasa among the sages," the first in each category, the greatest of each group. But still the Vibhuti is not the

१६. को अद्घा वेद क इह प्रवोचत् कृत आजाता कृत इयं विसृष्टि: ।
अर्वाग् देवा अस्य विसर्जनेनाऽया को वेद यत आबभूव।।
ऋा० १०/१२९/६)
यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन् त्सो अंग वेद यदि वा न वेद।
(ऋ० १०/१२९/७)

Avatar; otherwise Arjuna, Vyasa etc. would be Avataras as well. The divine quality is not enough; there must be the inner consciousness of the Lord Himself.

The Gita also does not speak of the Avatar as a magician or a man of supernatural power but as the divine leader of humanity who is born like any other human being and assumes human sorrow and suffering. The rationalist would have cried to Christ, "If thou art the son of God, come down from the cross" or might have pointed out logically that the particular Avatar was not divine because he died by disease as a dog dieth, then he would in fact miss the root of the whole matter. For, according to Navrang Swami, if the Avatarhood is in the human form, human limitations and laws must be assumed in order to show that they could be transcended.

Then there is the last point to take note of that the Gita was said through Krishna and not by Krishna. Some people are likely to harbour doubts on the statement of the Gita- "Come to my shelter", because they say it signifies the ego. Ordinarily an egotist mind is not so straightforward as to ask anyone to come to his feet. He would rather be very diplomatic to put such ideas, since he knows that with so much vanity none can command the obedience of others. An egotist is very shrewd, he would invent scores of other witty ways to cajole people. But Krishna does not do so. He plainly says : "Come to Me", because the Gita says : "भगवान-उवाच", that is, it is the Lord Who speaks. Krishna's body and speech are only the media. His straight call indicates as if someone else is there peeping through Him. He at one place also makes it clear that the ignorant know Him not, as they perceive only his physical body. Krishna's "I" is also not the ego of any enlightened man, for the enlightened person can have no such ego. His "I" is the Infinite, the Supreme Purusha's Himself. Krishna personality is only a vehicle. God wants to communicate to man through speech and Krishna has become the medium. (see the Mahabharata, Ashvamedh-parva, Ch. 16)

# 4. Categories of souls

According to the Gita (Ch. XVI) two kinds of created beings are there in this world: the divine and the worldly, the Daivy and the Asuri, Navrang Swami calls them Ishvari-sristi and Jiva-sristi. CC-O. Nanaji Deshmukh Library, BJP, Jammu. An eGangotri Initiative

The divine heritage is destined eventually for liberation, and the worldly for eternal bondage. Krishna says, I throw these worldly souls in the transmigrating wombs of the devilish births and they move from life to life without ever coming to Me, without final liberation and are ultimately reduced to the most wretched condition (16/19-20). In fact, they are created only to run the show of this worldly stage and destroy it as and when it is needed so that the drama of life goes on and on.

The ego in Nature is a reflection of the consciousness of Akshara Purusha. There are two selves in us, the lower self of the ego which being a part of Nature or Kshara Purusha changes helplessly within the workings of Nature, and the higher self which is the witnessing bird and the eternal part of Akshara (ममैंव अंश: सनातन:).

The lower self is Jiva, a product of Kshara and the higher self is Atman, the product of Akshara; both combined in the drama of world becomes Jivatma, the soul. Akshara is like a world-soul present in every higher self by essence and in every lower self by reflection. From Akshara only that power proceeds, which assumes the lower form of Nature (Apara-Prakriti) on the one hand and on the other the higher form of Para-Prakriti which becomes the multiplicity of souls. The world-soul Akshara is the sustainer of this entire drama of world-creation. As a spectator, Akshara accepts the representation of the play in each soul. The moment He withdraws the sanction in any soul, the action of that soul comes to a stop in Nature.

Navrang Swami here draws our attention to one more secret and subtle aspect of the Higher Truth. He says that there are some Higher souls, different from the lower self and the higher self of Akshara. They are not the eternal parts of Akshara, but rather have descended in Akshara's world-dream straight from the abode of Purushottam for a relish of Akshara's creation.

"I am called Purushottam and am higher than the unchangeable eternal, i. e. Akshara. Another form of Mine is My spouse who sports with her other various forms (souls). The creation of the cosmos is one of the ways of her sport. This creation has been transplanted in the dream of Akshara Purusha and in this dream I am going to take incarnation in the land of Vrij."17

Thus there are three types of creation of beings:

- (1) the higher souls descending from the abode of Uttam Purusha,
- (2) the divine souls emanating from Akshara Purusha when He begins to dream of this universe, and
- (3) the wordly souls created by Kshara Purusha for putting up its show of creation.

Each type has its wealth, its specific role in the drama of creation to play. Since the whole creation itself is a sport (Lila) of God, the creation has to be sustained by its parmanent actors who could enjoy their existence of delusion in the egoism of their glory and power and in the violence of their wrath. They could be easily recognised in the world, as they never seek Him and never think of being rescued from this world.

Akshara who is spoken of in the Gita as the imperishable Unmanifest, is actually the supreme goal of the souls that are the eternal parts of Him. In Prannath's philosophy such souls are known as Ishvari-sristi. The two categories of souls are also noted by Aurobindo. He writes: "The Jivan-mukta can go whereever his aim was fixed, into a state of Nirvana or one of the divine worlds..... If originally he is not a being of the evolution but of some higher world, he would go back to that world. If he wants to go higher, it is logical that he should return to the field of evolution so long as he has not evolved the consciousness proper to that higher plane. The orthodox idea that even the gods have to come to earth if they want salvation may be applied to this ascension also. If he is originally an evolutionary being-Ramkrishna's distinction

प्रवोत्तम संज्ञं च क्टस्थातीतं अव्ययम् । 89. स्वामिनी द्वितीयं तत्त्र क्रीडते तत् कला गणैः ॥ गमिष्यति ततः साक्षात कीडा ब्रह्मांड उत्थितम । अक्षर स्वप्न सम्भूते ब्रह्मांडे अस्मिन् ब्रजान्तरे ।। ययं मदाज्ञया सर्वे प्रविशन्तु स्वलीलया। परुषोत्तम संज्ञो अयं रसः त्बा गमिष्यति । (प्राण संहिता 29/8, 11, 12)

of the Jivakoti and Ishvarakoti may be extended to this also—he must proceed by the evolutionary path to either the negative with-drawal through Nirvana or some positive divine fulfilment in the increasing manifestation of Sachchidanand. As to the impossibility of return, that is knotty question. A divine being can always return—as Ramkrishana said, the Ishvarakoti can at will ascend or descend the stair between birth and immortality."

And those higher souls who are known as "Brahman-sristi" in the philosophy of Prannath and who have descended in this creation from the Supreme abode, the Param-dham of Purushottam, are bound for attainment of the Supreme alone. The path prescribed for them is none other than the path of exclusive devotion (अनन्य अव्यक्षिचारिणी भक्ति) of a loving woman's heart.

#### 5. Sadhana:

Krishna in fact arranges in a descending order of simplicity a tabulated list of all the paths, indicating the easiest of the whole lot in the end : "Knowledge is better than mere practice of ritualistic Sadhana; better than knowledge is meditation; and better than medition is Karmayoga, i. e. the renunciation of fruit of action" (12/42). But to Krishna (6/47) among all the types of Karmayogis, the best is one who endowed with full faith worships Him constantly, chants His names always and glorifies Him. Then, again, "Arjuna, My devotees are of four kinds: the man in distress, the seeker for wealth, the seeker for knowledge, and the devotee full of knowledge. Of these, this last, the devotee full of knowledge is the best, for he is in constant union with me and his devotion is single-minded. He abandons all other duties and dharmas and takes refuge in Me alone. To such devotees I deliver from all their sins and grace them with the eternal abode of My supreme being". (17/16-17; 18/66, 62)

Here is, according to Navrang Swami, a great hint for the higher souls for their release from the world and return journey to the supreme abode of Purushottam. To such souls no other path would do, since not only the other paths are difficult and cumbersome in their practice but also are meant for the souls emanating from Akshara Purusha. For the higher souls descending from

<sup>1. &</sup>quot;Letters on Yoga", Pt. I, Section VIII, Rebirth,

Purushottam's abode the path of exclusive devotion and self-consecration is supreme and simple, too, in its practice. A little of its practice can bring to them the fruits of self-realization, in the light of which they come to see their intrinsic relationship and essential unity with the Absolute. It is for these souls that the typical expression used by Ktishna is "unprostituting devotion" (अव्यभिचारिणी भक्ति).

As a matter of fact, the particular qualities associated with devotion, such as meekness, compassion, obedience and readiness to serve are to be found more in women than in men. To this extent, feminity is in all beings. When a woman is most truly herself, she longs to give everything, claims nothing, surrenders herself and renounces self-will. That is why, it is said that the Supreme Lord is the only man; all others from Brahma downwards are like women. The heart of the Bhakta is necessarily a woman's heart longing for union with her husband.

Prannath's philosophy follows the Gita in its strict sense as he takes up the issue of Exclusive Devotion as prescribed by the Gita. Purushottam is the Lord of all the gods and His abode could be attained only by serving Him with exclusive devotion (अनन्य भक्ति) and not by worshipping the various tribal gods. If popular deities are worshipped for earthly gains, it must be understood as Avidhipurvakam. For having true knowledge of the Supreme truth, one does not worship the multiple gods such as Rudra, Vishnu, Brahma; since lokas upto Brahma are all perishable. Brahmaloka is the farthest limit of manifestation of the world of gods (8/16).

Normally, the translators of the Gita translate Krishna's terms, 'Ananya-bhakti' and 'Avyabhicharini-bhakti' as unswerving and unfailing devotion of love. The terms 'unswerving' and 'unfailing' would simply mean 'स्थिर' and 'सुद्द' which however is not the meaning of 'अन्योभवारिणी' of the Gita. One who has read Prannath's philosophy would readily see the significance of these subtle and fine words, pregnant with profounder meaning. They have especially been used by Krishna repeatedly to dissuade the Vedic and Puranic followers from indulging in multi-god-worship. The path advocated by the Veda is ritualistic and binding the souls to the world नेगुण्य विषया वेदा. The true devotee is required to transcend the path of the polytheism of the Veda.

Avyabhicharini Bhakti of the Gita indicates the absence of many objects and despicable vacillations of the human mind Our devotion has not to waver from idol to idol, from one god to another.

Prostitution denotes an attitude which is not loyal to one's husband. Therefore, the warning 'not to prostitute' is indeed very powerful to express that the point of concentration should not be at the crowd of deities, as prescribed by the Veda, but must faithfully serve one chosen single Master, greater than whom there is none.

If sacrifices are to be offered, they must be of the spirit and not of material objects. If meditation of the Yoga and the Sankhya is to be pursued, it could be useful as a means of silencing the mind, but it should not be forgotten that the Supreme is the Lord of Yoga and the silence of the universal self is only an aspect of Him. If women, as gateway to hell, could pose a threat, that is to an artificial life of a hermit and not to a Bhakta whose exclusive devotion has no prostituting loyalities and ceases to see any manhood except in Lord Purushottam. Thus, says Navrang, womanhood becomes an acceptable, nay desirable, form of mental framework for every man and woman to reach the Absolute in the philosophy of the Gita.

# Path of knowledge:

Shankaracharya upheld the path of knowledge and argued in its favour. According to him, Arjuna was a "Madhyam-adhikari" for whom renunciation was dangerous and so he was advised to take to action. For the Sannyasi, on the other hand, the world is illusory and God is not of the world and nor is He the cause of the world. The cause of the world is ignorance, the master of our works is desire. To such nihilists the Gita retorts that it is a one-sided truth and it can create only confusion. For, Krishna says, were I to act upon such half truth, I should destroy the peoples and the world, but one should not forget that I am also the creator of this world. The whole range of human action has been decreed by Mc. Hence the whole truth is that the world, the Kshara, is not a vain play with ignorance of Maya, it is a joyful manifestation, however imperfect, rather than an undesirable obscuration.

The Buddhists or Shankarites may exalt a quiet life of contemplation, but Navrang Swami says that the message of Purushottam attracts all those souls who have come to this world for a relish of action and adventure. Action is for self-fulfilment, for meeting the demands of the sport of God. Therefore, we could find out the truth of our innermost existence by living it and need not follow any other artificial standard. Our Svadharma must answer to our Svabhava, the inner being. Only then will the self achieve its fulfilment by keeping alive the precious divine flame of uniqueness and by making ourselves perfect instruments for the Supreme Lord.

Action performed in such a spirit becomes worship or a yajna in which one accepts things as they come, as if they were ordained by the Lord Himself. Such a karmayogi becomes free in his deepest being by establishing relation with a realm of reality where karma does not operate. He has no longer the ambition to do or to achieve. Hence the chain of karma is broken here and now, within the flux of the material world. Then God acts through him and the question of right or wrong does not arise.

When Arjuna, having seen the 'Vishvarupa' realises that he is only the instrument for the work of God, his agony is over. Victory or defeat ceases to disturb him, as it is the outcome of the law of nature. Then in the highest stages of devotion desires fall off by themselves and renunciation becomes a natural state of mind. Renunciation therefore refers not to the act itself but to the frame of mind behind the act. Arjuna is asked to renounce all the things, but not by fleeing from them, rather by whole-heartedly surrendering them to the one who takes the entire responsibility—योग क्षेम वहाम्यहम्. For realisation of wisdom is not what is accomplished in time. Wisdom is ever pure and perfect and is not the fruit of an act.

According to Navrang Swami the Gita thus presents a synthesis of the two methods, generally followed by the religionists. One path is that of knowledge, call it Sankhya or Yoga or by any other name; and the other is the path of rituals such as sacrifices, ceremonies, charity, deity worship, etc., as prescribed by the Veda. But to the Gita the sacrifice (Yajna) of the knowledge is the highest on the one hand and on the other the real renunciation is impossible without works done as a sacrifice. Hence, the devotee of the Gita is advised not to renounce his worldly duties and Svadharma, considering them to be illusion, but rather to abandon the inner desire of fruits of his action and the egoistic attitude in the performance of his worldly duties, since action is not only a preparation but itself the means of liberation. Actions have to be given up in their performance. inner renunciation of all worldly actions and yet their physical performance is the culmination of the sacrifice. The fire of sacrifice is the Brahman-ward energy. This then is the true knowledge in which the liberated man has to perform actions in a spirit of sacrifice.

#### 7. Tattvadarshi of the Gita:

The man of the world throws himself into the perishable world, the Kshara. The discriminating wise withdraw themselves into the silence of the unchanging divinity, Akshara. But the ideal man of the Gita is the Tattvadarshi who goes beyond the two extremes and places himself in the hands of Purushottam to reconcile all possibilities in the world without getting involved in them.

The Gita, according to Navrang Swami, does not try to define action by any outward signs through which it can be recognisable to an external gaze. It overlooks even the orninary ethical distinctions by which men seek to guide themselves in the light of the human reason. For what is action and what is inaction, as to this even the sages are perplexed. Judging by social and ethical standard, they discriminate by accidentals and do not go to the root of the matter.

What then is the solution? No outward distinctions need be made, is the reply. The first thing to be noted in regard to action and inaction is to do all those works which our sva-dharma demands us to do. We have been placed in a particular profession by virtue of our abitities, aptitude and the family or social circumstances. If, on the other hand, impelled by egoistic desires we try to adopt the profession of others, thinking it to be meritorious, we would struggle throughout our life in vain and would never attain to peace, harmony and inner joy.

Second advice of the Gita for a Tattvadarshi is to perform action without the personal egoism of the doer. For the real doer is the Nature of the Lord, the executive Shakti of Akshara. All human souls, indeed, who have achieved a certain greatness are conscious of an impersonal force working through them, yet many of them are not free from egoistic reaction. However, the Tattvadarshi attains this freedom. He sees simply what the Supreme demands from him. He has no personal enemies to be conquered, but if fight he must he sees only men who have been brought up against him by circumstances. He will not hasten to slaughter and struggle, but if the war comes in the way of maintaining righteousness and Dharma, he will accept it without rancour and with perfect understanding.

The ordinary man depends upon outward things for his happiness. Therefore, he has desire, anger and passion. He measures all things in the balance of good fortune and evil fortune. None of these things can affect the Tattvadarshi who is ever satisfied without any kind of dependence. He is no longer an actor in the play but becomes a witness of the play.

Thirdly, Navrang Swami says that for such a witness the outward renunciation becomes meaningless in the message of the Gita. He is renunciated in doing the works, for he has renounced the desire of the fruit of actions. He knows himself to be the soul supreme above the instruments of Nature. By not imagining himself to be modified by her gunas he releases himself from the necessity of returning by birth into her bondage. Strictly speaking, as affirmed by Navrang, the songs celestial of the Gita have been sung only for these Tattvadarshi souls. In the introduction of his "Gita Rahasya" Navrang Swami writes:

भोगता तत्व दर्सी सुधिर, लख लियो इनहीं स्वाद। भई गीता इन कारण, सनमन्ध तत्व अनाद॥

The Tattvadarshis alone are the enjoyers of the taste of the celestial songs of the Gita and for them alone these songs were sung by Krishna with whom the Tattvadarshis have eternal spiritual kinship.

पारथ के मिस करके, कही गीता निरवान । भई तत्व दर्सी कारएो, भोगता येह परवान ।।

Arjuna was instrumental for Krishna to deliver His message to the chosen Tattvadarshi souls to be born on earth for a relish of the drama of life.

> परम रहस्य गुझान्त गुझ, परस गूढ़ निदान । तत्व दर्सी के कारणे, कही गीता भगवान।।

The secret was supreme and the mystery was supreme; answer to those secrets was also supreme. The mystery was, however, unravelled by the Lord for the Tattvadarshis, the souls supreme.

गीता अरथ निज मूल को, जाने कृष्ण ही लेख । के तत्व दर्सी जानहीं, येह निश्चे कर देखा। CC-O. Nanaji Deshmukh Library, BJP, Jammu. An eGangotri Initiative

The true meaning of the Gita is verily known either to the speaker Krishna Himself or to the Tattvadarshi descending from Krishna's eternal abode.

जिने-जिने टीका करी, अक्षरा अरथ विचार । कर उनमान सबे किये, भिन्न-भिन्न अरथ अपार ॥

There have been numerous commentators who, failing to probe into the purport of the words used in the Gita, interpreted them literally. Their speculations were, however, based on assumptions with the result that divergent commentaries, countless in number, outwitted each other.

आश्रय श्री निज कृष्ण को, विन सनमन्य निहं पाय। विन तत्वदरसी दरसे नहीं, कारन निज ये आय॥

But none can understand Krishna without kinship with Him. Another reason is that only men of discernment, the Tattvadarshis, can discern the Supreme.

लक्षा अरथ अनुभव बिना किये अरथ उनमान। तो सबकी टीका विषे, अरथ भिन्न-भिन्न जान।।

In absence of the true purport of the words and experience of such kinship, millions of interpretations were conceived and that is the reason why in different commentaries of the Gita, the meanings vary from author to author.

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अब देखो समझ विचार के, परमहंस जो होय । जथारथ द्रष्ट देखिये, इष्टवाद न कीजो कोय ॥

Therefore, the enlightened ones should now behold and ponder over the meaning implicit in the Gita without engaging themselves in any dispute over it.

श्री निज कृष्ण कृपा बिना, बिना सतगुरु प्रसाद । गीता रहस्य पावे नहीं, कोटि जनम करो बाद ॥

For, without the grace of Lord Krishna, and without the grace of Guru, none can probe into the true meaning of the Gita even if one discusses over it for millions of lives.

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सो करी कृपा निज आपही, सतगुरु श्री कृष्ण होय। सो कृपा ते कहत हूँ, गीता रहस्य निज सोय॥

The Lord Himself has come to me as my Guru (says Navrang) and has bestowed His grace upon me. It is that grace only which has streamed forth in the verses of this Gita-Rahasya.

जान सको तो जानियो, नहीं वाद विवाद । मैं अपने हित कारणे, कहयो गीता अरथ संवाद ॥

I wish these verses may illumine one without one's indulging in disputation; though I have written them especially for my own enjoyment.

Thus, according to Navrang Swami, Arjuna was as instrumental as Krishna Himself in delivering the message of the Supreme to the Tattvadarshi souls of the eternal abode of the Supreme Purusha. The very fact that after the battle of the Mahabharat he asked Krishna of the need of repeating the teachings of the Gita at the time when he was completely at peace proved that the secret wisdom of the Gita was not fully grasped by Arjuna and Krishna had to be apologetic in letting him know that it was not He who sang the celestial songs of the Gita, but there was someone else who had sung them through Him and they could now no more be repeated through Him.\* With His limited power of incarnation He did not know the mystery of that wisdom Himself. Thanks to Sanjaya who was able to intuit the whole of the Gita clairvoyantly and could hand over to us the perennial wisdom of the Absolute.

Whatever was said to Arjuna through Krishna in the battle-field was actually conveyed to the world as the most precious and secret knowledge renewed for the creation after the Pralaya-night of the

<sup>\*</sup> परं हि ब्रह्म कथितं योगयुक्तेन चेतसा । न शक्यं तन्मया भूपस्तथा वक्तुम् अशेषतः ॥ स हि धर्मः सुपर्याप्तो ब्रह्मणः परिवेदने । न च साद्य पुनर्भूयः स्मृतिर्मे संभविष्यति ॥

Maha-rasa. Since at the time of the Maha-rasa the entire creation was dissolved and thereafter created again, as it is, for the continuance of the sport of the Absolute with the eternal souls of His abode, the secret-most knowledge of it had also to be renewed for those souls for their return journey to the original Home. The battle-ground of the Mahabharat could be the best venue to reveal such knowledge to the whole of mankind.

### CHAPTER I

# Kshara, Akshara and Uttam Purusha

Fifteenth Chapter of the Gita is of great significance, because in this Chapter Krishna has revealed to Arjuna the profoundest secret of the metaphysics of the ultimate reality—गृह्यतमं शास्त्रं इदं उनतं (15/20). This Chapter concerns with the description of the Absolute and His three statuses as (i) Kshara Purusha, (ii) Akshara Purusha, and (ii) Uttam Purusha. Lord Krishna, however, states that all these statuses are His only; Akshara is a part of His abode and even the life-force of the Nature i.e. Kshara is His.

Akshara Brahman is a partial expression of Uttam Purusha. It is that part of the Supreme which takes upon Itself the task of creating the universe and controlling it. The part in which it is extended in the form of creation is known as changeable Kshara and the capacity in which It supervises the creation of Kshara is called the imperishable reality of Ishvara who pervades the universe. But ultimately it is the Supreme reality of Purushottam who expresses Himself as Akshara Purusha in one of His multiple aspects and it is His manifestation as Ishvara that acts as the ruler of the creation and the indwelling reality of cosmic being. On account of this subtle relationship the Supreme is called Ishvara, the divine light that is at the root of the creation and on account of it the abode of Akshara becomes a harmonius blend with the Supreme abode of Uttam Purusha.<sup>1</sup>

(गीता रहस्य: अध्याय १५)

<sup>1.</sup> अक्षरातीत पुरुष उत्तम, पूर्णानन्द अपार । स्वयं सिद्ध सरूप है, आनन्द घन अपार ॥ ये निज उत्तम पुरुष को, स्वयं सिद्ध ऐश्वर्ज रूप । सो अक्षर पुरुष अनन्त है, ए मेरो अखण्ड सरूप ॥ अक्षर पुरुष अन्यक्त जो, है मेरो निज धाम । चेतन प्रकृति मेरी जगत में, न्याप रही सब ठाम ॥ याथे मोहे ईश्वर कहयो, अक्षर धाम सरूप । है ता अक्षर के परे, उत्तम पुरुष अनूप ॥ या सनमन्ध कर ईश्वर हूँ, हूँ जोति रूप गर्भ मूल । यातें अक्षर धाम में, अरु उत्तम पुरुष सनकूल ॥ यातें अक्षर धाम में, अरु उत्तम पुरुष सनकूल ॥

द्वाविमी पुरुषौ लोके क्षर: च अक्षर एव च। क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थो अक्षर उच्यते।। उत्ताम: पुरुषः तु अन्यः परमात्मा इति उदाहृतः। यो लोकत्रयं आविश्य बिभित अव्यय ईश्वर:॥ (गीता १५/१६-१७)

There are two persons in this world: Kshara and Akshara. Kshara is all these perishable existences and Akshara is the imperishable immutable. But other than these two is the highest spirit who is called Paramatma and who, as imperishable Ishvara, enters the three worlds and sustains them.

The triple statuses of the Absolute throw light on every aspect of the reality and explain all the forms of the truth, relative and non-relative. In its Supreme form as Purushottam the Absolute abides in its pristine glory as non-relative Being; and in its relative aspect the Absolute manifests Itself as the substratum Akshara of the ever-changing universe Kshara. Since all these three statuses are His only and since it is the one and the same reality that expresses itself as the universe as well as rules it, it is also known as Ishvara. Thus Ishvara is the controlling and the ruling aspect of Akshara, higher than whom is Uttam Purusha—the Supreme Godhead.<sup>2</sup>

(गीता रहस्यः अध्याय १५)

<sup>2.</sup> ये पुरुषोत्तम अध्याय विषे, कहे तीन सरूप।
एक क्षर एक अक्षर है, एक उत्तम पुरुष अनूप।।
सरुप तीन भिन्न-भिन्न कर, प्रगट करन को जान।
कारन ये तत्वदरसी सही, कही गीता भगवान।।

यमात् क्षरं अतीतः अहं अक्षरात् अपि च उत्तमः अतः अस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥ यो मां असंमूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् सः सर्वावित् भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत।। (94/95-98)

As I surpass the perishable Kshara, and am higher even than the imperishable Akshara, I am celebrated as the Supreme Reality in the world and in the Vedas. He who, undeluded, thus knows Me, the Highest Person, is the knower of all and worships Me with his whole being, O Arjuna.

Pure consciousness of Akshara Brahman is devoid of any internal as well as external differences and is untainted by the imperfections of any relative condition. Once the realm of pure consciousness is also transcended, the Supreme Purusha Himself comes to shine forth as the Absolute consciousness and infinite bliss which is a self-abiding Reality of ineffable joy. Only those who are devoted to this Supreme Reality with all their being come to know of Him. But to 'know' here is not a mere intellectual comprehension; it is rather a deep subjective spiritual apprehension that such a one of the greatest of devotees thus experiences in himself.3

<sup>3.</sup> जाति विजाति भेद तें, रहित अक्षर ब्रह्म । है ये अक्षर ते अतीत, चिद्घन पुरुष उत्तम ॥ ते भगत हैं उत्तम पुरुष के, जानत हैं ते मोहि। सब जोग जुगत जानत ते ही, जो मैं कहत हूँ तोहि॥

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रं इदं उक्तं मया अनघ ।
एतद् बुद्घ्वा बुद्धिमान् स्यात् कृतकृत्यः च भारत ।।
इदं तु ते गृह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्यामि अनुसूयवे ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यत् ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसे अशुभात ।।
(१५/२०; ९-१)

And so have I revealed this most secret doctrine, let a man but understand it, for then he will be a man who truly understands and will have fulfilled his duties, O Arjuna. To you who has no prejudices and preconceptions I will reveal the profound secret of wisdom combined with knowledge, by knowing which you shall be freed from evil.

In the fifteenth chapter Krishna has actually revealed His secret which He had promised to disclose to him earlier. Having explained the three statuses of the Absolute, one perishable Kshara and the other two imperishable ones, Akshara and Purushottam, Krishna puts the seal. This is the secret doctrine hitherto not known fully to the saints of the Vedas, Upanishads etc. and is now renewed for Arjuna with an assurance that if he or anyone else truly understands it, he will understand the very basis of spirituality. His concept of action and inaction shall be so clear that he shall be able to fulfil his duties without any further confusion and would obtain release from this world of evil for good.

(गीता रहस्यः अध्याय १५)

<sup>4.</sup> अब पन्द्रहमें अध्याय विषे, कहै अखण्ड दोय सरूप। कहे जथारथ प्रगट कर, गुझ ता गुझ अनूप।। गुझान्त गुझ यह रहस्य निज, सब ज्ञान में उत्तम। उत्तम विद्या सब विद्या तें, लखे तत्वदरसी मरम।।

न तत् भासयते सूर्यः न शशांको न पावकः। यत् गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तत् धाम परमं मम।। ज्योतिषां अपि तत् ज्योतिः तमसः परं उच्यते। ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य धिष्ठितम्।। (१४/६, १३/१७)

The sun does not illumine that, nor the moon, nor the fire. That is My supreme abode from which those who reach it never return. I am the light of lights, said to be beyond darkness. I am the object of knowledge itself, and am seated in the hearts of all.

This Light of the Absolute consciousness cannot be illumined by the material sources of light available in the phenomenal world, such as the sun, the moon or the fire. For He is the light of all these material sources and is in fact a revelation of the root of creation. Ishvara who is His divine illuminating factor, shines forth the entire universe. This supreme abode of Absolute consciousness into which the Tattvadarshi souls can rise on transcending the relative aspects of the Absolute is described here as the abode of Ineffable Bliss wherein the souls supreme can bathe and meet the Infinity. This divine effulgence of the Absolute consciousness is the final experience that is to be gained by the Tattvadarshi souls who have prepared themselves for the final flight into the Supreme.

<sup>5.</sup> ये ससी सूर पावक ये, नहीं प्रकाश सीय। हैं ईश्वर बीज वाही को, मो प्रकाश जगत माहें। तस्व दरसी परमहंस को, परम पद निज येह। ब्रह्मानग्द निज रहस्य को, है चिद् विलासी तेह।। सब जोत की जोत यह, आदित्य वरण सुहाय। अगुण आदि दे सबन में, ये ही प्रकास्यो आय।।

मम योनिः महद्ब्रह्म तिस्मिन् गर्भ द्धामि अहम् । सभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवित भारत ।। सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः संभवन्ति याः । तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिः अहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥ (१४/३-४)

O Bharat, son of Kunti, My Nature in her primordial undeveloped state is the womb of all creatures; in that I place the seed (of consciousness). The birth of all beings follows from this combination of matter and consciousness. Therefore, of all the bodies that take birth from different wombs, this primordial matter is the Mother, and I am the procreating Father.

The creation is not different from the Creator and the universe could be none other than the Absolute Himself. But the way the Absolute, a non-relative principle, associates Himself with the creation as the father of all beings, shows how the Supreme divinity pervades every part of Kshara Purusha, though basically remaining transcendent to all of them. The owner of a factory is the father of each and every operation in it. He overshadows the factory by his personality and the factory is his manifestation; yet he is not the factory nor does the factory exist in him. This is what is explained further.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6.</sup> मम जोइन(योनि) महद ब्रह्म, बीज अमृत रूप सौय । हों पिंडीभूत ता बीज को, अब कहूँ मोक्ष जो होय ।। हों ईश्वर सब जीव को, कारन करता रूप । ये अंश जीव मेरो सही, प्राप्ति मोहि सरूप ।।

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिं आपन्नं मन्यन्ते मां अबुद्धयः । परं भावं अजानन्तो मम अव्ययं अनुत्तमम् ॥ न अहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमाया समावृतः । मूढः अयं न अभिजानाति लोकः मां अजं अव्ययम् ॥ (७/२४-२५)

The unintelligent think of Me as having come to manifestation from the unmanifest state of Akshara, because they do not know My higher nature, changeless and supreme, greater than whom there is none. Veiled by My Yogamaya I am not revealed to all. Hence the ignorant folk do not recognise Me as the unborn and imperishable Reality.

People, by and large, are ignorant of the knowledge of the Absolute who is distinct from the manifest universe as well as the unmanifest universal Self. Men who lack even the capacity to perceive the spiritual truth that shines in and through the physical body of Krishna fail to realise the divinity hidden within Him and hence regard Him as an ordinary man. They remain oblivious of the fact that God could manifest Himself in the human form by adhering to the laws of His nature, i.e. veiled by His Maya, though in essence all throughout He remains the unchangeable reality of Ishvara.

<sup>7.</sup> हों व्यक्त ते अव्यक्त रूप, मो परम भाव है सोय। यातें मूढ सबे कोऊ, मनुष्य कहत हैं मोय॥ आवर्ण योगमाया विषे, हुँ नहीं प्रकास्यो ताय। ये मूढ मोकों जाने नहीं, अव्यय ईश्वर आय॥

ज्ञेयं यत् तत् प्रवक्ष्यामि यत् ज्ञात्वा अमृतं अश्नुते । अनादिमत् परं ब्रह्म न सत् तत् न असत् उच्यते ॥ सर्वतः पाणि पादं तत् सर्वतो अक्षि शिरो मुखम् । सर्वतः श्रुतिमत् लोके सर्वं आवृत्य तिष्ठति ॥ (१३/१२-१३)

Now I shall describe that which is to be known and by knowing which life eternal is gained. It is the Supreme Brahman who is beginningless and who is said to be neither existent nor nonexistent. He has hands and feet everywhere; eyes, heads and faces everywhere; and with ears on all sides He dwells in the world, enveloping all.

The Lord promises that He will explain to Arjuna the spiritual knowledge that could be grasped by correct discrimination. One of the ways of describing the Absolute is through known physical equipments. If this Principle of Absolute consciousness is to be described, it is easier for a layman to understand when He is said to exist pervading all by possessing hands and feet everywhere, by possessing ears and mouths in all directions, and by perceiving all with thousands of heads and eyes on all sides so as to envelop life with matter everywhere. Moreover since the tree of the universe, the Kshara, sprouts from the seed of Akshara, the feet and the heads of the seed can be on all sides when it is manifest in the form of a tree. The tree is perishable, the seed is imperishable; hence the divine principle extending in the form of creation can neither be called true nor untrue. He transcends all realms of our limited experiences. Therefore our human concepts of time, being and nonbeing cannot define Him within the web of our perceptions. How can the human mind which is the finite product of the tree of Infinity fathom its immensity?8

(गीता रहस्य: अध्याय १५)

<sup>8.</sup> कह्यो श्री भगवान् तब, जो अध्यातम ज्ञान । सो विवेक कर कहत हूँ, तोहे पारथ परमान ।। जड़ चेतन के जोग कर, सहस्र सिरषा सरूप। अनेक पुरुष पद नेत्र हैं, अनेक सिर रंग रूप।। कह्यो न जाय सत असत ये, न आद अन्त निरधार। जो भयो जीव या वृक्ष तें, सो याको न पावे पार।।

सर्वेन्द्रिय गुण आभासं सर्वेन्द्रिय विवर्जितम्। असक्तं सर्वभृत् च एव निर्गुणं गुण भोक्तृ च।। अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तं इव च स्थितम्। भूतभर्तृ च तत् ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च।। (१३/१४, १६)

He appears to have the qualities of all the senses and yet is without any grossness of the senses, unattached and yet supporting all, free from the qualities of Nature and yet enjoying them. He is indivisible and yet He appears to be divided among beings. He is known as creating all (as Brahma) supporting all (as Vishnu) and destroying them (as Rudra).

In describing the reality of the Absolute the language of contradiction cannot be avoided. Therefore, Krishna says, though I pervade all the universe and the universe also abides in Me, yet I am not in the universe and the universe also does not exist in Me. Purushottam enjoys the drama of creation, the Kshara, through His Sat-aspect Akshara and Himself remains away from the creation. Therefore, it could be said that He has the qualities of the senses and yet is devoid of the grossness of all the senses. Sitting in a bus the traveller is both in motion and without motion. Conditioned by the bus, i.e. carried by the bus he is moving, though sitting in it he moves not. Similarly it is God alone who manifests everywhere in all the fourteen planes of divine existence and it is the supreme only who creates Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and other smaller gods and demi-gods, and it is He alone who assumes the multifarious roles of the infinite selves, nevertheless there is nothing in Him. The ocean of the Infinity is without waves and something other than the waves notwithstanding the fact that the mass of each wave is nothing but the ocean itself.9

(गीता रहस्य: अध्याय ११, १२)

<sup>9.</sup> हूँ व्यापक सब ही जगत में, अरु जगत है मो माहे। हूँ नहीं व्यापक जगत में, अरु जगत मोमें नाहें।। यातें साक्षी रूप हूँ जड़ चेतन को जान। मैं करम मैं भोगता, मैं पालक परमान॥

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावो अध्यातमं उच्यते। भूतभाव उद्भव करो विसिर्गः कर्म संज्ञितः॥ अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषः च अधिदैवतम्। अधियज्ञो अहं एव अत्र देहे देहभृतां वर॥ ( ८ / ३-४ )

Param Brahman is imperishable supreme; His essential nature is called Akshara which is Adhyatma. Karma is the name given to the creative force that brings beings into existence. Thus, Arjuna, all perishable objects are Adhibhuta; the indweller who is cosmic Spirit is Adhidaivata; and in the subjective yajna, i.e. the act of perception here in the body is Myself as Adhiyajna.

The eternal abode of Mine is Para-Brahman attaining to which one does not return to the world. Akshara is an imperishable aspect of this Supreme and is conditioned by the power of Maya. Hence It is known as unmanifest state of the existence of the Nature which is the womb of My creation and the Adhyatma aspect of Being. The creative urge which fulfils itself in the creation is 'Karma', that form of ignorance which assumes the existence of individual selves. The Adhibhuta aspect of Being is the perishable existence of the phenomenal world. The indweller Ishvara is the Adhidaiva aspect of Being and pervades it so as to initiate the creation and regulate it by bringing into existence the triple forms of beings: the cosmic, the mental and the organic. Thus it is the life force of the Nature that pervades everywhere and I as Adhi-yajna am the cause of both spirit and matter. The wise, therefore, discriminate and offer their devotion to the Supreme.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10.</sup> है अक्षर परब्रह्म रूप, ते मेरो निज धाम ।
ते परमगित पहुँचे जहाँ, सो फिर न आवे इह ठाम ॥
सविलक सुभाव अव्यक्त को, है अध्यात्म जेह ।
मम जोइन है महद् ब्रह्म, मूल जगत जो ताको तेह ॥
करम कहत हैं ताहि को, अनादि जीव है जेह ।
अनादि अविद्या सो बंध्यों, सुध होय क्यों तेह ॥
अधिभूत क्षर पुरुष है, ऊरध मूल लों आय ।
अधिदैव ईश्वर पुरुष, मो को लख तूं नाय ॥

अजः अपि सन् अव्यय आत्मा भूतानाम् ईश्वरः अपि सन् । प्रकृति स्वाम् अधिष्ठाय संभवामि आत्म मायया ॥ यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिः भवति भारत । अभ्युत्थानं अधर्मस्य तदा आत्मनं सृजामि अहम् ॥ (४/६-७)

Though I am unborn and am of imperishable nature, though I am the lord of all beings, yet I take birth through My Yogamaya and rule over My own Prakriti. Whenever there is a decline of righteousness and rise of unrighteousness, O Arjuna, then I manifest Myself.

The Supreme, in order to perform His sport, takes upon Himself the conditioning of matter with His divine element and manifests Himself as Ishvara, the witnessing universal Self, and also in a particular embodiment in the world for serving the deluded generation of that time. Whenever there is a decay of Dharma, the Infinite, from time to time, wears the matter-apparel and appears on the scene of activity to put down the evil tendencies in man. This is a law of divine role in the creation of His own manifestation.<sup>11</sup>

(गीता रहस्यः अध्याय १०, ६)

आदि करम उतपित करे, जगत भूत सब कोय।
महद मानसी मैथुनी, सर्ग तीन कहे सोय।।
अधिजग्य चैतन्य प्रकृति, व्यापी सब में सोये।
है कारन दोउ प्रकृति को, याते भजे ते मोये।।

<sup>(</sup>गीता रहस्यः अध्याय १४, ५)

<sup>11.</sup> ऐसी विभूति मेरी सब में, जड़ प्रकृति है जेह। ये जड़ प्रकृति के अंश कर, धरयो जगत में येह।। हों जड़ चेतन प्रकृति को, साक्षी ईश्वर सरूप। ये मूढ मोको जाने नहीं, हों अव्यय कारन रूप।। जबे जबे धरम बेद को मिटे, अधरम होय अपार। तबे तबे मैं जन्म ले, करूं असुर संघार।।

# COMMENTS

How can the ignorant folks know Him, says Navrang Swami, when this ultimate secret though revealed to Arjuna was, however, lost in the jungles of verbosity and interpretations with the passage of time until the coming of Mahamati Prannath? Throughout the discourses, Krishna has been preparing Arjuna for the revelation of the secret of the Absolute Purushottam. He has kept one note always sounding and that was the idea of a supreme Godhead who dwells within Akshara and Kshara, but is greater than both. "I who am here in this human body, am the secret of the cosmic action." This "I" is the greater I of whom the universal spirit of Akshara is only a partial expression.

In the imperishable, infinite city of Brahman Two things there are—

Wisdom and unwisdom, hidden, established there: Perishable is unwisdom, but wisdom is immortal; Who over wisdom and unwisdom rules, He is another.

Krishna's remarks make sense when He says that this wisdom was lost, though at times to some of the seers of the Vedas it became known but the torch of this secret knowledge could not be continuously handed down to the sages of the latter times. No doubt, the following extracts of the Vedas amply demonstrate that some of the seers of the Vedas did have some inkling about the Supreme Reality, higher than Akshara, however it was not adequate:

Multiple universes emerge from Akshara and again merge into It. The Divine Purusha, however, is higher than It as He transcends all forms, vital energies and mind and is pure and all-pervading inside and outside of the world.

All the three are established in this Brahman as spoken by the Vedas and He alone abides in Akshara. He sustains the Kshara and the immortal Akshara and this whole creation in its manifest and

(अथर्व, मुण्डक २/१/१-२)

तथा अक्षरात् विविधाः सोम्य भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र च एव अपियन्ति । दिव्यो हि अमूर्तः पुरुषः स बाह्य अभ्यन्तरो हि अजः अप्राणो हि अमनाः शुभ्रो हि अक्षरात् परतः परः ॥

unmanifest form. The Jivatma who is bound by Nature and becomes the enjoyer is freed from all its bonds by knowing that Supreme.2

Kshara is ignorance and Akshara is knowledge. One who rules the ignorance as well as knowledge is higher than both.3

This creation is not the true essence of Akshara Purusha but is merely the glorification of Him. The fourth status of the Reality is that Purusha who is much greater than the smallest part which has extended forth in the form of the world. The remaining three statuses of the Reality are still higher than the fourth and are full of bliss. Thus Akshara Purusha who has His three statuses of sublime existence much higher than His fourth status became the cause of the creation in His fourth status. Then Virat was born alongwith the ruling deity Adhi-purusha (i.e. Adi-Narayana) who created the gods, the earth and the creatures.4

Thus this extended universe is not all that Brahman is, there is an Eternal greater than it by which alone its existence is possible. Cosmos is not Brahman in all His utter reality but a single expression, a true but a minor motion of His being. All the spiritual experiences of the Acharyas and the prophets are reconcilable if we cease to press on one or other exclusively. The simple truth is that the Divine Reality is something greater than the universal existence, yet all universal and particular things are that Divine and nothing else. Therefore, on one hand, the Gita invites our attention to the

(यजु० श्वे० १/७-१०)

(यज्वेंद ३१/ ३-४)

<sup>2.</sup> उद्गीतं एतत् परमं तु ब्रह्म तस्मिन् त्रयं सुप्रतिष्ठा अक्षरं च । संयुक्तं एतत् क्षरं अक्षरं च व्यक्त अव्यक्तं भरते विश्वं ईशः ।। अनीशः च आत्मा बध्यते भोक्तृ भावात् ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्व पाशैः। क्षरं प्रधानं अमृत अक्षरं हरः क्षरात्मनावीशते देव एकः ॥

<sup>3.</sup> क्षरं तु अविद्या हि अमृतं तु विद्या । विद्या अविद्ये ईशते यस्तु सः अन्यः ॥ (यज्० श्वे० ५/१)

एतावानस्य महिमाऽतोज्ज्यायांश्च पृरुषः पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपदस्यामृतं दिवि॥ त्रिपाद् उध्वं उदैत्पृरुषः पादोऽस्येहा भवत्पृनः । ततो विराडजायत विराजोऽधिपुरुष: ॥ सजातोऽअतिरिच्चयत पदचाद् भूमि.मथोपूरः ॥

divine manifestation in varying gradations in all the zones of the cosmos, on the other, it lays stress on His supra-cosmic existence. For, otherwise, the mind would miss its higher goal and remain turned towards the cosmic only and thus attached to some partial experience of the Divine in the cosmos. "All are situated in Me, not I in them," remarks Krishna. Through the universal spirit of Akshara. He can be said to bear the universe as the secret spirit in us bears our thoughts, works and movements. But He is not contained by any, just as the ether is not contained in any form, though all forms are derived ultimately from the ether.

The Puranas, of course, have their own figurative style of narrating the subtle aspects of the Supreme Reality. They would, however, say that the Supreme who is knowledge, truth and bliss is the lord of all. Akshara Brahman is an infinitesimal aspect of Him and the great Virat (cosmos) is further smaller manifestation of Akshara. The Little Virat is again a further smaller manifestation of the great Virat. The little Virat is indeed the Para-Nature which manifests itself as four-armed Vishnu in Vaikuntha-loka and as two-armed Krishna in Goloka. Such gods like Narayanas, Shambhus and Vishnus of universes are numerous and they all merge in Maha-vishnu who in turn merges in Nature and Nature in Akshara at the time of dissolution. Therefore, the ultimate end of all creation is Akshara. At the mere turn of His eye-lids thousands of Maha-vishnus and hundreds of Maha-shambhus rise and fall.

It seems the Maheshwar Tantra, a treatise in the Tantra tradition,

(देवी भागवत ९/८/ ७९-८१)

( ब्रह्म वै०, प्रकृति खण्ड )

<sup>5.</sup> सर्वेषां परमात्मा च सिन्चदानन्द रूप घृक् । ब्रह्मादयश्च तस्यांशाः तस्यांशश्च महाविराट् ॥ तस्यांशश्च विराट् क्षुद्रः सैवैयं प्रकृतिः परा । सैव कृष्णोद्विधाभूतो द्विभुजश्च चतुर्भुजः । चतुर्भुजश्च वैकुण्ठे गोलोके द्विभुजः स्वयम् ॥

नारायणश्च सम्भुश्च संहृत्य स्वगुणान्बहून्।
 महत् विष्णौ विलीनाश्च ते सर्वे क्षुद्रविष्णवः ॥
 महाविष्णुः प्रकृत्यां च सा चैव परमात्मि।

has been written especially to throw a flood of light on the relation between these two Purushas only. It begins, at first, by describing the nature of Brahman which is non-dual. But since Its bliss aspect is of sporting nature, It assumes many forms. These forms are like waves that undulate in the ocean of Its bliss. The anthropomorphic or figurative way of describing this sporting aspect of the Absolute could be in the form of Krishna and His Gopi-souls. There is an eternal sport that goes on between Krishna and His Gopi-souls and thus an incessant stream of bliss-consciousness flows eternally.

The stream of bliss-consciousness can abide in two forms: fluid and solidified state. Purushottam is the solidified state of the stream of consciousness and the spouse (Swamini) is the fluid aspect of that stream which acts as a mirror for Purushottam to realise His own self. From the fluid aspect of the stream proceeds all other forms and centres of consciousness (Gopi-souls), giving rise to infinite varieties of bliss.

The stream of consciousness fully solidifies itself in Me. Know Me as the enjoyer-aspect of the blissful stream of consciousness and

> महाविष्णु सहस्राणि महाशम्भु शतानि च। नेत्र भूमणमेवास्य तदक्षरं परं पदम्।। (पद्म पुराण, उत्तर खण्ड)

शम्भु विरंचि विष्णु भगवाना। उपजिंह जासु अंश तेनाना।। विष्णु कोटि सम पालन कर्ता। रुद्र कोटि सत सम संहर्त्ता।। (तुलसी रामायण)

7. द्रवीभूतो घनीभूतो रसस्य द्विविधा स्थितिः । द्रवीभूतः प्रियाघारो घनीभूतोक्षिगोचरः ।। तस्मात् प्रियाभीष्टभावान् स्वतः प्रकटयत्यसौ । द्रवीभूतः प्रियाधारः प्रियाभावात्मको रसः ।। प्राधान्यं तत्र चेच्छन्ति धनीभूतादपि प्रिये । रसो नैव प्रसिध्येत प्रियालम्बन वर्जितः ॥ प्रियादशेँ रसः पश्येत स्वात्मानं प्रतिबिम्बवत् । आदर्शापसरे यद्वन्मुखस्य अनुलम्भनम् ॥

(माहेश्वर तंत्र २४/ २५-२८)

My spouse (Swamini) as the enjoyed-aspect of it. The spouse is the chief kinetic energy of the Absolute and manifests Herself in infinite centres of consciousness, i.e. Gopi-souls. There is, however, no such division of the whole and part between them, since all these centres of energy of the Absolute actually mirror each other in the creativity of the eternal sport.8

Brahman, though essentially one, however, becomes two: Purushottam and Akshara. Purushottam is the union in the eternal sport of blissful love. Akshara is the separation in divine love and causes the emergence of all many-ness, ignorance and consciousness of pain.<sup>9</sup>

But Akshara is only an infinitesimal aspect of the profound ocean of the Absolute's eternal bliss. Akshara's existence manifests itself as the consciousness of longing which, of course, seeks its fulfilment in its union with the Eternal Bliss of Purushottam. Hence the eternal existence of Akshara is the existence of eternal longing of relative consciousness seeking its fulfilment in the Absolute consciousness.<sup>10</sup>

8. रसोहं मूर्तिमान् साक्षात् धनीभूतः कलावति ।
तस्याद्यंभागं मां विद्धि द्वितीयं स्वामिनीं प्रियाम् ॥
स्वामिन्या एव ताः सख्यः कलारूपः कलावति ।
न स्वामिन्या विभेदोस्ति सखीनामणुमात्रतः ॥
अत एवासु सर्वासु द्ववीभूतो वसाम्यहम् ।
विहश्चापि धनीभूतस्ताभिः क्रीडारतोस्म्यहम् ॥
(माहे० ४०/ २८, ३४-३५)

(माहे० ४०/ २८, ३४-३५)
9. एकमेवाद्वयं ब्रह्म द्विघा लीला विभेदतः ।।
प्रवृत्तिश्च निवृत्तिश्च लीला भेदै व्यवस्थिता ।
निवृत्तिः सुखसंज्ञाहि सुखमानन्दरूपकम् ।।
प्रसंगाप्रकृतेः देवि प्रवृतिः बहुरूपिणी ।
अजानतां वरारोहे दुखरूपतया स्थिता ।।

(माहे० २१/४९-५१)
10. आग्रहमात्रो देवेशि नित्यानन्द महोदधेः ।
लेश एव सदा तिष्ठेत्स कामो नित्यरूप धृक् ॥
कामरूपी सदानन्दः कामांशो लेश उच्यते ।
तस्मात् एव अक्षरे देवि नित्यकामो हि दर्शने ॥
(माहे० २०/५३-५४)

Akshara is also the knowledge aspect of the Absolute Bliss-consciousness. Hence desire cannot take its root in Him nor can it sprout in the Absolute. But actually desire is the harmonising factor in the being of both Akshara and the Absolute. It, therefore, first casts its shadow on the Absolute Bliss and then holds the consciousness of Akshara. While casting its shadow on the Absolute it creates a longing in the fluid stream of bliss-consciousness, i.e. the spouse Swamini, to know and participate in the sport of Akshara. And, on the other hand, when desire holds the consciousness of Akshara, His longing for a relish of the Absolute's bliss seeks its fulfilment.<sup>11</sup>

To put it in a nutshell and in a simpler language Purushottam Himself says in Puran Sanhita: I am called Purushottam and am higher than the unchangeable eternal, i.e. Akshara. Another form of Mine is My spouse who sports with her other various forms (Kala or souls). The creation of the cosmos is one of the ways of her sport. This creation has been transplanted in the dream of Akshara Purusha and in this dream I am going to take incarnation in the land of Vrij. 12

Navrang Swami observes that Purushottam did incarnate in Krishna of Vrij, but that incarnation was for a brief period of eleven years and fifty two days only for performing His divine sport in the

( पु० सं० २६/५, ११-१२ )

<sup>11.</sup> अक्षरे ज्ञानतन्मात्रे स्वतः इच्छा न जायते।

न प्रवर्तयते साक्षात् पूर्णात्मा पुरुषोत्तमः ॥

सामरस्यमयीं प्राहुः तस्मात् आगमवेदिनः ।

आनन्दगा सामारस्यात् स्वपक्ष विषयग्रहा ॥

संगिनं तु परित्यज्य भृशमंगेष्वसर्पत ।

स्वामिनीषु ततो जाता दिदृक्षा दुखदर्शने ॥

(माहे० २०/ ५६-५८)

<sup>12.</sup> पुरुषोत्तम संज्ञं च कूटस्थातीतं अव्ययम् । स्वामिनी द्वितीयं तत्तु क्रीडते तत्कलागणैः । गिमण्यित ततः साक्षात् क्रीडा ब्रह्माण्डं उत्थितम् । अक्षर स्वप्न सम्भूते ब्रह्माण्डेऽस्मिन् व्रजान्तरे ॥ यूयं मदाज्ञया सर्वे प्रविशन्तु स्वलीलया । पुरुषोत्तम संज्ञोऽयं रसस्तत्रा गमिष्यति ॥

human form. No sooner did he leave Vrij for Mathura than Purushottam's incarnating force withdrew itself. Nevertheless, since in Krishna had also descended the higher forms of Goloka-nath and god Vishnu, the post-Vrij activities of Krishna are carried on by the divine forces of Goloka-nath and god Vishnu. The teachings in the Gita have, therefore, come from Vishnu-avatar of Krishna. God Vishnu acts like an ambassador and represents both Goloka-nath and Purushottam in the cosmic creation. His divine form in Kurukshetra speaks to Arjuna as a representative of the Higher Reality and apprises him of the transcendental aspects of His own existence. This is not only the spiritual experience of Navrang Swami or his Guru Prannath but is corroborated by ample evidences of the scriptures as well.

In the Mahabharat, after the battle was over, Arjuna asked Krishna to impart the teachings of the battle-ground again, since he felt then to be quite peaceful and relaxed and fully able to receive them. To this Krishna answered that those teachings of the Gita could not be repeated, for they were from some Supreme Power and not from Him, implying thereby that He was nothing more than an incarnation of god Vishnu. However, as Vishnu-incarnation he tried to give a few hints of the spiritual knowledge and thus the Up-Gita was conceived at the end of the Mahabharat in the 16th chapter of the Ashvamedhi-parva.

"Krishna, the Supreme performed His sport for eleven years and fifty two days and withdrew His force to His abode". 13

"After the blissful sport in the Madhu forest of Vrindavan, Goloka-nath took the charge of Krishna-avatar and performed a similar blissful sport for seven days with Gopis in whom now were seated the Srutis. Subsequently, Krishna came to Mathura and killed Kansa within four days of His coming over there. Hereafter, Goloka-nath also withdrew His divine force and the disc-bearer god Vishnu took charge of Krishna-incarnation upto the end of His career in Dwaraka, and did away with the evils on earth. In this way, Krishna had the triple divine forms, the secret of which is

<sup>13.</sup> तस्मात् एकादश समा द्वि पञ्चाशत् दिनानि च।

कृष्णो त्रजात्तु संयातो लीलां कृत्वा स्वं आलयम् ॥

( आलमंदार संहिता ६/११४ )

known to a very few".14

The killer of Kansa was Vasudeva Shri Krishna and not the son of Nanda. Actions performed in Dwaraka were from god Vishnu who is the lord of the world and a partial manifestation of Vasudeva Krishna. The works were done in Vrij by the divine force of the Absolute Krishna Himself, of whom the world teacher Vasudeva is a partial manifestation to perform His limited role in Mathura. As a matter of fact, the manifestation of the Absolute Principle in Krishna never extended anywhere beyond Vrindavan. Therefore, offer worship to Krishna of two-arms, never to Krishna of four-arms, Krishna of two-arms is the Supreme Deity who plays His eternal sport with Gopi-souls. 16

The status of Vasudeva, i.e. Goloka-Krishna in the Divine hierarchy has to be understood properly. He is the supreme deity

- 14. श्रुताभिः संस्तुतो रासे तुष्टः कामवरं ददौ ।
  वृन्दावनं मधुवनं तयोः अभ्यन्तरे विभुः ॥
  ताभिः सप्त दिनं रेमे वियुज्य मथुरां गतः॥
  चतुभिः दिवसैः ईशः कसादीननयत् परम्॥
  ततो मधुपुरी मध्ये भुवो भार जिहीर्षया।
  यदु चन्नावृतो विष्णुः उवास कितिचित् समाः॥
  ततस्तु द्वारकां यातस्ततो वैकुण्ठं अस्थितः।
  एवं गुह्यतरः प्रोक्तः कृष्णलीला रसः त्रिधा॥
  (वृहत् सदाशिव संहिता १२-१६)
- 15. कंसं जघान वासुदेवः श्री कृष्णो नन्दसूर्न तु।

  द्वारकां च ययौ विष्णुः कृष्णांशाद्यो जगत् प्रभुः ॥

  साक्षात् कृष्णो व्रजे नित्यं स्वांशेनैव विहारिणः।

  तस्यांशौ हि मथुरायां वासुदेवो जगद्गुरुः॥

  द्वारकायां तदंशोऽस्ति विष्णु वीर्यो यतः प्रभुः॥

  (सनत्कुमार संहिता ३५/५१,५५)
- 16. कृष्णो अन्यो यदु संभूतो यः पूर्णः सः अस्ति यतः परः । वृन्दावनं परित्यज्य स क्विचन् न एव गच्छिति ।। द्विभुज सर्वदा स्तोत्र न कदाचित् चतुर्भुजः । गोप्यैक्या युतः तत्र परिक्रीडित नित्यदा ।। (श्री कृष्ण यामल)

(Adi-Narayana) in the cosmic creation and at the time of dissolution all the gods such as Shiva, Durga, Vishnu, Ganesh and the like merge in Him. He in His own turn also merges in Nature and becomes one with Akshara Brahman.<sup>17</sup>

Hence, the impermanence of Goloka-dham is obvious. Goloka-Krishna takes incarnation in the four-armed son born of Vasudeva, but no sooner does the child change into the two-armed form, Purushottam's incarnation takes place and overshadows the incarnation of Goloka-nath, whose divine force remains in the background until the quitting of Purushottam. Then, afterwards, Goloka-nath fulfils the promise given to the gods at the time of churning the ocean.

The story goes that after the churning of the ocean, there was a quarrel over the distribution of the nectar. God Vishnu had killed the demon Kalnemi over the dispute. Acharya Shukra, the preceptor of the demon-race, revived Kalnemi by administering the life-giving herb "Sanjivani". Thereupon, Kalnemi did severe penance and pleased Brahma who conferred upon him the boon of his invincibility against the attacks of the gods including Vishnu. Terrified with the new powers gained by Kalnemi, the gods approached Vasudeva of Goloka who pacified them by promising that He Himself would incarnate in Krishna and kill Kalnemi, because at that time Kalnemi shall also take birth as Kansa, the foe of Krishna, thinking Him to be Vishnu's incarnation only.<sup>18</sup>

When this promise was fulfilled after slaying Kansa, Goloka-nath withdrew Himself from Krishna. Thus, alongwith Purushottam, Goloka-Krishna was also the lord of Vrindavan and played His sport for nearly 12 years and then proceeded to Goloka alongwith

18. GARGA SANHITA, Ch. 6.

<sup>17.</sup> प्रलये प्राकृते सर्वे देवाद्याः च चर अचराः। लीना धाता विधाता च श्रीकृष्ण नामि पंकजे।। गोलोकस्य च गोपाः च विलीनाः तस्य लोमसु। स कृष्णः प्रलये तस्यां प्रकृतौ लीन एव हि।। एकैव च पराशक्तिनिर्गुणः परमः पुमान्। चित् अभिन्नत्वं आपन्ना प्रलये सः एव तिष्ठिति।। (देवीभागवत ९/३८/५३, ६८-६९)

His Radha.<sup>19</sup> The glories of Goloka were therefore established in Gokula and the glories of Vaikuntha were found established in Dwaraka.<sup>20</sup>

The Absolute Brahman Himself had descended in the child Krishna to lighten the heavy weight of human agony. Along with Him came the lord of Goloka Bhagwan Shri Krishna, the beloved of Radha as well as Narayana of Vaikuntha, the beloved of goddess Kamla.<sup>21</sup>

Who could have reconciled all these conflicting texts of the various scriptures, if Prannath's philosophy had not been there<sup>22</sup> and Navrang Swami's "Gita Rahasya" had not thrown sufficient light on the new interpretation of the Gita itself.

20. गोलोक ऐश्वर्य यत् किंचित् गोकुले तत् प्रतिष्ठितम् । वैकुण्ठ विभवं यत् तद् द्वारकायां प्रतिष्ठितम् ।।

(नारदीय पुराण, उत्तर खण्ड, अध्याय ५९)

(पद्मपुराण, वृन्दावन रहस्य, १)

- 21. पूर्ण ब्रह्म स्वरूपोऽयं शिशुस्ते मायया महीम् । आगत्य भार हरणं कर्ता - घात्रा च सेवितः ॥ गोलोकनाथो भगवान् श्री कृष्णो राधिकापतिः। नारायणो यो वैकुण्ठे कमलाकान्त एव च। (ब्रह्मवैवर्त पुराण, कृष्ण जन्म खण्ड, अध्याय १६/५)
- 22. जिन जानो शास्त्रों में नहीं, है शास्त्रों में सब कुछ।
  पर जीव सृष्टि क्या जानही, जिनकी अकल है तुच्छ।।
  ( महामित प्राणनाथ, कीर्तन ७१ )

<sup>19.</sup> द्वादश वर्षाणि क्रीडित्वा वृन्दावन वनेश्वर:। ततो गच्छति गोलोकं राधिका सह माघवः॥ (गौतम संहिता)

#### CHAPTER II

## Three Kinds of Souls

There are a number of verses in the Gita in respect of the soul. Grouped together they throw an increasing light on the nature of the soul and on its different roles determined by its intrinsic essence.

Knowledge of the self is the greatest secret of all secrets. Because a mortal is as far removed from immortality as a dreamer is from the waker. In our ignorance, most of us think that we are a body with soul. It is only the discerning Tattvadarshi who can realise that he is "a soul with a body." The chances are that when this wisdom is explained by a Sad-guru like Krishna to a student who is seemingly attending with all enthusiasm, he may raise himself up to, perhaps, the very gates of the truth, but there he himself may come to bar his own entry into the Rahasya Guhyatamam by overlooking the subtle aspects of the Reality repeatedly pointed out. The chief reason for this may not be the lack of adequate sincerity and concentration on the part of the aspirant, but, as Navrang points out, it would be the absence of kinship of the soul with the Supreme.

That is why, Krishna says, the self is so difficult to realise that hardly anyone perceives its marvel; some speak of this as a wonder; another hears of this as a wonder; yet having heard none understands it at all—श्रुत्वा अपि एनम् वेद न च एव कश्चित्. Among thousands of men one perchance strives for self-realization and of those who strive and succeed, some rare one knows Me in essence. (7/3). To the query, who is that rare one, Navrang answers that it is the Tattvadarshi one who has descended from the abode of the Supreme. The mysterious wisdom of the Gita is brought forth for them only by making Arjuna instrumental to such unfoldment.

(गीता रहस्य: अ० १)

पारथ के मिस करके, कही गीता निरवान।
 भई तत्वदरसी कारने, भोग्ता येह परवान।।
 यासे श्री निज कृष्ण को, बिन सनमन्ध निहं पाय।
 बिन तत्वदरसी दरसे नहीं, कारन निज ये आय।।

द्वौ भूतसर्गो लोके अस्मिन् दैवः आसुर एव च । दैवी संपत् विमोक्षाय निबन्धाय आसुरी मता ।। तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचं अद्रोहो न अतिमानिता । भवन्ति संपदं दैवीं अभिजातस्य भारत ।।

(१६/६, ५, ३)

In this world two kinds of beings come into existence: the divine and the worldly. The divine souls are deemed for liberation, the worldly jivas for bondage. Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred and absence of pride-these belong to the divine ones born for the Divine Estate, O Bharat.

The two types of souls are described in the Upanishad as the two birds sitting on a tree, one of whom eats the fruits while the other eats not but merely watches. This watching bird is the eternal Ishvara from whose abode the divine souls descend in the world; the other is the deluded jiva involved in Prakriti, cleaving to the Nature and enjoying her. The Tattvadarshi souls who see the root of this tree of creation are, however, different from both of them. They could be recognised by the sublime virtues that shine forth from the innermost depths of their being. Absence of fear and pride, angerlessness, restraint of the senses, all these constitute the irresistable attraction of the personality of the Tattavadarshi, who with temperance in his speech, mind and action discovers for himself a fulfilment of his worldly role keeping in sight his kinship with the eternal abode of the Supreme.\*

बैठे पंछी दोय वृक्ष पर, एक अन्त एक आद।
देखे ईश्वर इक वृक्ष को, जीव बंध्यो फल स्वाद।
आदि अन्त या वृक्ष को, लखे जो मूल सहित।
ते तत्वदरसी कहावही, याकी न्यारी स्थित।। (अ०१५)
है दिव्य उत्तम अधिकारी के, लछन उत्तम आय।
निर्भय रहे ते जगत में, उत्तम ज्ञान जोग पाय।।
मिटे स्वाद इन्द्री विषे, काम क्रोध अहंकार।
मनसा वाचा करमना, स्वांत चित उदार।।
ये पहुंचे पद निरवान को, उत्तम पुरुष आधार।
लछन उत्तम या विध सबे, ये तत्वदरसी को सार। (अ०१६)

प्रवृत्ति च निवृत्तिं च जना च विदुः आसुराः।
न शौचं न अपि च आचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते।।
एतां दृष्टि अवष्टभ्य नष्ट आत्मनो अल्प बुद्धयः।
प्रभवन्ति उग्रकम्णिः क्षयाय जगतः अहिताः।।
(१६/७,९)

The worldly jivas know not what to do and what to refrain from; purity, good behaviour, and truth have no place in them. Thus these feeble-minded lost souls, with their cruel actions, come into existence only to destroy the world or, in other words, to perform their roles as villains in the world-drama.

The worldly jivas, as distinct from the divine souls, are actually the creation of Kshara Purusha, i.e. Adi-Narayana and their life is the life of ego, the lower self of desire engrossed in the workings of Nature. They are the reflections of the Universal Self of Akshara Purusha and are so created that they always lead away from their universal potentiality and precipitate their inclination towards atheism and violent struggle of life. They may be very scientific in their observation and analysis, but being materialistic in their outlook they recognise the constant change as the only form of the universe. Hence this whole creation is sustained by these permanent change-believing actors who could enjoy their existence of delusion and strife only through ever-changing phenomena of the world.

(गीता रहस्यः अ. १६)

और अधिकारी तामसी, सुन पारथ कहूँ तेह। ते माने देह को आतमा, नास्तिक मत है जेह। करे हिंसा के करम सब, गिने पाप नहीं पुन्य। इन्द्री अरथ सबही करे, असुद्ध हृदय महासुन्य। ते करम भोग करके पीछे, अधोगति को पाय। अशुद्ध चित ताको सदा, नहीं आतम बुद्धिताय।।

तान् अहं द्विषतः कूरान् संसारेषु नराधमान्।
क्षिपामि अजसः अशुभान आसुरीषु एव योनिषु।।
आसुरीं योनिं आपन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि।
मां अप्राप्य कौंतोय ततो यान्ति अधमां गतिम्।।
(१६/१९-२०)

As the most degraded of men in this world they are malicious and are always thrown by Me into devilish births. Arjuna, these unintelligent persons, thus taking evil births, never come to Me and ultimately, birth after birth, sink lower and lower to reach the bottom grades of beings.

When a materialist thus works in ignorance of his own universal potentiality, he naturally behaves as though he is an animal. He insists that lust and power are the mother urges because of which everything is happening, every achievement is gained and every profit is made everywhere in life. Drunk with passions and propelled by these silly self-centred urges of vain glory and power, he brings about disaster to his life and a discordant note of disharmony in the community. As a result, such persons slowly sink lower to reach the bottom grades of beings and Krishna says, I hurl these worldly jivas for ever in such wombs born of whom they work in the world as maniacs and as tireless hunters of pleasures in action.

(गीता रहस्यः अ० १६)

नास्तिक बात सबही करे, दोष न गिने निदान । अन्ध नरक को जात हैं, निश्चै पारथ जान ॥ काम कोध मद लोभ मोह, विषय वासना रूप । धरम अधरम माने नहीं, सदा पाप सरूप ॥ कहे अधिकारी अधम ये, अधम करम की खान । जायें अन्ध नरक को, पाप रूप निदान ॥

अशास्त्र विहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जनाः। दम्भ अहंकार संयुक्ताः काम राग बल अन्विताः।। कर्षयन्तः शरीस्थं भूतग्रामं अचेतसः। मांच एव अंतः शरीरस्थं तान् विद्धि आसुर निश्चयान्।। (१७/४-६)

Even they are also the worldly type who overlook the teachings of the scriptures and practise austerities impelled by the force of lust of power and passion, hypocrisy and egoism. They senselessly torture all the elements in the body, not knowing that God also dwells within that body and suffers on account of their ignorance.

Then there are other extremists who are the habitual practitioner of asceticism or self-mortification, against the injunctions laid down in the scriptures. Their austerities are painful, unworthy and unprofitable. Men given to ostentation and egoism only do them. Numerous acts of charity and self-denials are performed in the name of religion, but by following them no creative unfoldment of the inner personality could be successfully brought about and no spiritual enlightenment can be expected from these unintelligent expenditure of energy in wrong channels. For they are prompted by the ego's song of success that hums in the depth of their being in an anxiety to quench a nameless thirst which they are constantly feeling. They do strive, day and night, and by their maddest ravings they do satisfy their urges of glory and power; but the fact is that the game of desires is an endless game. Hence, they also circle endlessly in the eternal wheel of creation; since their intellects, cut off from their permanent moorings, have no platform of their own to spring from and come to a correct judgement and evaluation of life, trapped as they are in their own ego-centric vanities and self-conceits.\*

<sup>\*</sup> करे करम जे तामसी, शास्त्र हीन ते आय।

विषय करे रुचि अपनी, अघोलोक को जाय। (अ०१७)

करे तपस्या राजसी, करे राजसी दान।

जे जे जग्य देव राजसी, कथे राजसी ज्ञान।।

करे घरम बहु गरव सों, मान बड़ाई चाह।

रते मोह अहंकार में, कहे सरग हम जांहि।।

जस होय सब जगत में, लोक बड़ाई लेख।

ते करे जग्य बहु विघ के, तहाँ मोको मत देख।। (अ०१६)

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हदः देशे अर्जु न तिष्ठति । म्रामयन् सर्व भूतानि यन्त्र-आरूढानि मायया ॥ यथा प्रकाशयति एकः कृत्स्नं लोकं इमं रिवः । क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥ (१८/६१,१३/३३)

Arjuna, truly speaking, God abides in the hearts of all beings and causes them to revolve by His power as if they were mounted on a machine. And, Arjuna, just as the one sun illumines the whole world, so does the one Self of the universe illumines this entire world of becoming.

The puppets have no existence, no life, no emotions of their own; they are only the expressions of the will and intention of the unseen hand that moves them. Ishvara lends His power to all beings to act. Ishvara is a kind of Divine consciousness which vitalises inert matter and renders it vibrant and dynamic, capable of perceiving, feeling and thinking. This Divine consciousness in itself does not act; but in its presence matter and its product "brain" get vitalised and seem to act in a mechanical manner. The feeling of doership or the notion of free-will emanates from the function of the ego; but the ego itself is an instrument of the Divine consciousness. Hence the essential life-force in all of us is one and the same, just as the same ocean or the same sun partakes of all its smaller manifestations.\*

<sup>\*</sup> जो जाने पारथ मोहि को, करता ईश्वर एह । पालक जाने मोहि को, मोहि विषे पोहोंचे तेह । (अ०८) जैसे सिंधु को अंस इक, जल संकेत सब माहि । यों अखन्डानन्द को, इक अंस सब ताहि ॥ (अ०४)

अनादित्वात् निर्मुणत्वात् परमात्मा अयं अव्ययः । शरीरस्थः अपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥ उपद्रष्टा अनुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः । परमात्मा इति च अपि उक्तः देहे अस्मिन् पुरुषः परः ॥ (१३/३१, २२)

But, O Kaunteya, since this supreme self, the imperishable is without beginning,, without qualities, it neither acts nor is contaminated, though dwelling in the body. This supreme spirit in the body is also called the spectator, the guide, the sustainer, the experiencer, the lord of all gods and the supreme Purusha.

Since the process of change always occurs in the properties and qualities of a thing, that which has no quality cannot change. And that which is changeless cannot perish and decay. The world of nature being mis-apprehensions of the Real, the realm of matter and its activities cannot contaminate the Perfect and the Eternal. Murders committed in the dream cannot soil the hands of the waker so also do the joys and sorrows of the dreaming ego not affect the waker. The waking self is like a spectator witnessing the joys and sorrows of the ego. He is like a guide, like a sustainer and an enjoyer in as much as he permits and supports the play of the ego and thus enjoys its experiences. He is also Ishvara and the Supreme spirit in so far as he mirrors the Lila of Purushottam and thus becomes instrumental in accomplishing his role in His sport. But all this one can understand only when one transcends the limitations of the play of His Maya and realises one's true self in its kinship with the supreme.\*

<sup>\*</sup> है व्यापक आकासवत्, सुख दुख दौऊ रहित ।
भासे देह के जोग कर, बंध्यो दोष सहित ॥
या विध पारथ जान तू, जीव को दुख न सुख ।
देह अभिमान से होत है, नर्क स्वर्ग दुख सुख ॥ (अ०२)
जीव स्वभाव छूटे जबे, धरे ईश्वर विषे बुध ।
मोक्ष होय ईश्वर विषे, ज्ञान हृदय होय शुद्ध ॥ (अ०६)
याते साक्षी रूप हूं, जड़ चेतन को जान ।
मैं करम मैं भोगता, मैं पालक परमान ॥ (अ०१२)

मम एव अंशः जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः । मनः षष्ठानि इन्द्रियाणि प्रकृति-स्थानि कर्षति ॥ शरीरं यत् अवाप्नोति यत् च अपि उत्क्रामित ईश्वरः । ग्रहीत्वा एतानि संयाति वायुः गन्धान् इव आशयात् ॥ (१५/७-८)

The soul is, indeed, an eternal fragment of Myself in the world of life. Abiding in Nature, the soul draws to itself the five senses and the mind which is the sixth. When the lord of the body, the soul, casts off body, it takes away these (the mind and the senses) into the body it migrates, as the wind carries perfumes from their places.

The Infinite has no parts. But through Its Para-Shakti It manifests Itself eternally in infinite number of jivas. These jivas take material bodies as their vehicles and along with the mind and the sense organs they function. At the time of death, they withdraw these, as it were, packing their belongings and having reached the new place, again unpacking and spreading out these to use the faculties through that new house of experience. Thus the ever-changing bodies which the jiva takes from one birth to another are the field, the mortal Kshetra and the jiva himself is its lord, the knower of the field, the immortal Kshetrajna.\*

<sup>\*</sup> हों ईश्वर सब जीव को, कारन करता रूप ।

ये अंश जीव मेरो सही, प्राप्ति मोहि सरूप ॥

कहयो तबे भगवान ने, लगे जीव जे जाहे ।

देह छूटे स्मरण होय, जैहें प्राण ते ताहें ॥ (अ०१४)

सबे क्षेत्र में क्षेत्रज्ञ, भयो जीव प्रकास ।

यातें जीव सनातन, देह उपजे होय नास ॥ (अ०१२)

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचित् न अयं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः।
अजः नित्यः शाश्वतः अयं पुराणः न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥
यः एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यः च एनं मन्यते हतम्।
उभो तौ न विजानीतः न अयं हन्ति न हन्यते॥
(२/२०-१९)

The soul itself is never born, nor does it die at any time, nor having come to live will it cease to live. It is unborn, eternal, unchanging and primeval. It is not slain, when the body is slain. They are both ignorant, he who thinks the soul to be capable of killing and he who takes it as killed, for verily the soul neither kills nor is killed.

Unlike the body and the mind, the soul is not subject to birth and death, growth and decay, or disease and contamination. Because things that have a beginning alone can end, whereas the soul is an eternal factor that abides at all times. Therefore, whenever people act on the assumption that they may cause injury to one or bestow favours on others, they delude themselves, since the soul actually is not exposed to any such injuries and influences. The enlightened ones act to perform their duty, even if slaughter and strife be a part of it for the maintenance of righteousness. Bodies killed or bodies garlanded make no difference to them, since the ever-changing physical organism is always a thing of suchvarying treatment.\*

<sup>\*</sup> जीव जरे न मारे मरे, नाहिन सोके वाय।

ये चैंतन्य अविनास नित, पारथ निश्चै आय।।
होय नाश देह को अवश्य, जीव अविनाशी जान।
सत्य असत्य स्वभाव दो, पलटे नहीं निरवान।।
पारथ ऐसे जुद्ध समय, क्षत्री करे न कोय।
मैं मारूं और मैं मर्ह्न, ये भरम भयो है तोय।।

न तु एव अहं जातु न आसं न त्वं न इमे जनाधिपाः। न च एव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयं अतः परम्। बहू नि मे व्यातीतानि जन्मानि तव च अर्जुन। तानि अहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परंतप।। (२/१२,४/५)

Never was there a time when I was not, or when you or these kings were not, nor will there ever be a time hereafter when we shall all cease to live. Many births of Mine as well as yours have passed; the only difference, Arjuna, is that I know them all while you know them not.

Krishna here declares, in unequivocal terms, that each soul is set on a great pilgrimage in which she uses varied vehicles temporarily to gain a set of experiences. And this pilgrimage is without beginning nor will there ever be a time hereafter when it will come to an end. Therefore, the vehicles of material apparel will always keep on changing. Wisdom demands no trace of concern for such a change occurring after a short or long duration of time which, of course, would depend upon the intrinsic need of the pilgrimage. Krishna says, I may know all that but for Arjuna and other souls such knowledge is not required as an essential pre-requisite of the successful pilgrimage each time.\*

करे सोच असोच को, पारथ तू चित माहें। देह अितत्य जीव नित्य को, पंडित सोचत नाहें।। कहयो यापर भगवान ने, सुनो पार्थ तुम येह। मेरे आद अन्त जन्म को, तू निहं जानत येह।। मैं तेरे जन्म जन्म की, जानत हों निरधार। तू मेरे करम जनम को, जानत नहीं लगार।।

<sup>(</sup>अ० २)

<sup>(</sup>अ०६)

प्रकृति पुरुषं च एव विद्धि अनादि उभौ अपि । विकारान् च गुणान् च एवं विद्धि प्रकृति संभवान् ॥ पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थः हि भुंङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान् गुणान् । कारणं गुणसंगः अस्य सत् –असत् –योनि – जन्मसु ॥ (१३/१९,२१)

Know thou that matter and spirit are both beginningless; and know thou also that all forms and qualities are born of nature. The soul, seated in material body, enjoys the qualities born of nature. Attachment to these qualities is the cause of his birth in good and evil forms.

As Ishvara is imperishable, it is but natural that His nature-matter and spirit ——should also be eternal, and beginningless. All qualities such as those which express themselves as pleasure and pain, sound and colour, and all gross elemental bodies or microcosmic small particles of gigantic galaxies, spring from Matter. The destinies of matter then become the joyful or painful experiences of the spirit, through his identification and attachment with them. Those who eke out their cherished satisfaction through vivid experiences choose their birth in good and evil wombs, but the one who awakens to one's higher spiritual nature rises above these experiences and regains the discovery of the true Self.\*

<sup>\*</sup> प्रकृति पुरुष अनादि सिद्ध, कहे पारथ मैं तीय । सो पुरुष—ईश्वर सरुप की, कही प्रकृति मैं दोय ॥ यातें प्रकृति दोऊ मेरी, जड़ चेतन अनाद । जड़ प्रकृति तें होय स्थूल, पिण्ड ब्रह्माण्ड जो आद ॥

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरः अपराणि। तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णानि अन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही। सत्वं रजः तमः इति गुणाः प्रकृति संभवाः। निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनं अव्ययम्।। (२/२२,१४/५)

Just as a person casts off worn-out clothes and puts on new ones, even so does the embodied soul cast away worn-out bodies and enter others that are new. Arjuna, the nature-born qualities of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas firmly bind the immortal soul in the body.

Changing of clothes that have become worn out or that are not required on a particular occasion, cannot be a pain to anyone of us. People change clothes according to the field; they wear one dress at the boiler sometimes and another at ther wedding reception at another time. Similar is the why and wherefore of death and thereafter, irrespective of the fact whether it comes early in the bloom of one's life or very late in old age. But the truth is that the changer of clothes or the bodies is not contaminated by such frequent changes. Nothing happens to him. He, on the other hand, gets ever new opportunities of eking out the desired satisfaction through new situations caused by the nature-born qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. However, the experiences of sorrows at the time of parting are his own mental creation and the change has nothing to do with it.\*

होय नाश देह को अवश्य, जीव अविनाशी जान। सत्य असत्य स्वभाव दो, पलटे नहीं निरवान।। देह मरे जीव ना मरे, जीव घरे देह अनेक। जैसे जीरण वस्तर तजे, पेहेरत नए विशेक।। मारी मरे जारी जरे, सुख दुख रुपी देह। सबे दुख व्याधि भरी, जरा मरन में येह।। (अ०२)

यजन्ते सात्विका देवान् यक्ष-रक्षांसि राजसाः। प्रेतान् भूतगणान् च अन्ये यजन्ते तामसाः जनाः॥ उद्यवं गच्छन्ति सत्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः। जधन्य-गुण-वृत्तिस्थाः अधः गच्छन्ति तामसाः॥

(80/8, 88/82)

Those who are under the influence of Sattvic qualities worship the gods, those of Rajasic disposition worship the demigods and the Tamasic people worship the ghosts and the nature spirits. In consequence, the Sattvic men go to the upper lokas, the Rajasic dwell in the middle regions, and the Tamasic, steeped in the lower thinking, sink downwards.

All these nature-born qualities are like ropes that bind the soul down to the ever-changing bodies and their sorrows or joys. The Tamas quality bind the soul to the sexual creations of the world, the Rajas to the creations of the mental world and the Sattva to the higher divine creations of gods and Ishvara, the Saguna Brahman. That even the Sattva quality binds the soul to his attachment to the highest loka of the Saguna Brahman displays the effects of gunas even in the continuity of godly existence after death. But where then is the release? Release can be had only when we transcend all the gunas and meet with the Supreme who is above the gunas.\*

सात्विकी राजसी तामसी, ये तीनों अर्जुन आने।
 ये तीनो मेथुनी सृष्टि को, करम विषे भिन भिन ।।
 ये तीनों जीव कारन विषे, मानसी कारन रुप।
 महद सृष्टि हे ईश्वरी, सो सरगुन ब्रह्मसरुप। (अ०१७)
 अधिकारी तीनों लोक के, तीनों लोक जाये देह।
 सकाम भोग करके परें, आवागमन में तेह ।। (अ०३)

न अन्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टा अनुपश्यति । गुणेभ्यः च परं वेत्ति मद् भावं सः अधिगच्छन्ति । गुणान् एतान् अतीत्य त्रीन् देही देह समुद्भवान् । जन्म-मृत्यु-जरा-दुखैः विमुक्तः अमृतं अश्नुते ॥ (१४/१९-२०)

But the one who perceives the agency of these three gunas in all the activities and knows that which is beyond these gunas, comes to My being. He, then, having crossed beyond the three gunas out of which the body and mind are evolved is freed from birth, death, old oge and pain, and attains to life eternal.

Mostly people worship one deity or the other. But since all the deities are the product of the three gunas, their devotees have no other fate except the attainment of their planes and continuance of their existence in the dream of Maya. If he wants to go higher, it is logical that he should return to the field of evolution so long as he has not evolved the consciousness proper to that higher plane. The Tattavdarshi, however, does not take long to discern his illusory life of dream and wakes up to the discovery of his true Self who has his kinship with the Infinite principale of the Supreme. When awake, the dream and the dream-vision of the three gunas end and the dreamer himself becomes the wakver.\*

<sup>\*</sup> जाने सो ही जानही, सांख्य जोग की जुंग्त । प्रकृति के गुन जोड़ के, पुरुष विषे हों मुक्त ॥ (अ० ८) आतम परमातम को, तत्वज्ञान होय ताय । तौ प्रकृति के गुन छोड़ कर, मेरे सरुप को पाय ॥ (अ० १२)

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तः तस्याः राधनं ईहते। लभते च ततः कामान् मया एव विह्नितान् हितान् ॥ अन्तवत् तु फलं तेषां तत् भवति अल्प मेधसाम् । देवान् देवयजः यान्ति मद्भक्ताः यान्ति मां अपि ॥ (७/२२-२३)

In fact, even those who endowed with faith worship the gods and from them obtain their desires, receive the benefits being decreed by Me alone. But all these people are of little intelligence and therefore the results they obtain are perishable. For the worshippers of the gods go to the gods, only My devotee attains to My being.

Seekers of happiness in the world of sense-objects may get their insignificant success in the fields of sense-enjoyments. Imbued with faith they may worship various gods and goddesses for seeking the fulfilment of their worldly desires. And Krishna adds that in all cases these desires are being dispensed by Him alone. But they forget one thing that if the Lord is the source of all transitory pleasures of the material world or those of the heavenly worlds of the higher deities, is it better to revel in a perishable world of those deities or to attain to the Imperishable Absolute Reality which is the source of all? For action undertaken in finite fields, employing finite instruments cannot but produce finite fruits; whereas those who act in infinite can be entitled to gain their entry into the Infinite.\*

हूँ ईश्वर सबही देव को, मोकों लखे न जान। यातें सबै अन्य देव को, भजे कामना मान।। काम आतमा सरग के, ऐश्वर्य भोग इच्छाय। जनम जनम फल करम कर, भ्रमबुद्धि जे ताय।। (अ०३) जो भक्त मेरो नित जो ग्रही, भजे भक्ति करि जेह। मन ताको मेरे विषय, मोमें प्राप्ति तेह ।। (अ०१४)

अवजानन्ति माँ मूढाः मानुषीं तनुं आश्रितम्। परं भावं अजानन्तः सम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥ मोघ आशा मोघ कर्माणः मोघ ज्ञाना विचेतसः। राक्षसीं आसुरीं च एव प्रकृति मोहिनीं श्रिताः॥ (९/११-१२)

The unintelligent see only the outward human body which I have assumed and not the Divine lodged in it. They know not My higher being as the

Lord of all existences. These senseless persons with vain hope, futile actions and fruitless knowledge have embraced a nature which is siendish, devilish and

delusive.

The Lord further states: ordinary men do not know My real status; as such they scorn Me when I assume human form and thus fail to avail themselves of the opportunity of self-withdrawal from the layers of the non-self. Should they happen to know that I am the origin of all beings and am an eternal Reality that could not manifest itself in its pristine gloory without being concealed by the limitations of Nature, they could not have thickened the dull-witted stupidities of their intellect. The scepticism to which a modern mind is inclined springs not from one's personal experiences but is rooted in ignorance of other's experiences in the sphere of spirituality. Many ignorant are so close-minded that even if they may get an opportunity of knowing such experiences, they would overlook it with complete derision.\*

हों जड़ चैतन्य प्रकृति को, साक्षी ईश्वर स्वरूप । ये मूढ मोकें जाने नहीं, हों अव्यय कारन रुप ॥ आवर्ण योगमाया विषे, हूँ नहीं प्रकास्यो ताय । ये मूढ मोकों जाने नहीं, अव्यय ईश्वर आय ॥ (अ० १०)

महाऽत्मनः तु मां पार्थं दैवीं प्रकृतिं आश्रिताः।
भजन्ति अनन्य-मनसः ज्ञात्वा भूतादि अव्ययम्।।
सततं कीत्यन्तो मां यतन्तः च दृढव्रताः।।
नमस्यन्तः च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ताः उपासते।।
(९/१३-१४)

But the noble souls who possess a divine nature know Me as the imperishable source of all creation and therefore worship Me constantly, without thinking any other deity or anything else. Always chanting My name and glorifying Me, they are firm in their vows of dedication to Me, they bow down to Me again and again, and worship Me with firm resolve and single-minded devotion.

The positive side of the art of God-realisation is pursued, when the seeker comes to know the true nature of Lord Krishna. Such a man of discernment moves about the world, seeing the Lord expressed through every movement and action, penetrating everything and playing through the endless variety of phenomena available in the universe. To him the Supreme is the doer of everything and is the Lord (Ishvara) of the creation. Hence he, abandoning the Nature as well as the Nature-born smaller divinities, engages himself exclusively in the worship of the Supreme. His surrender becomes complete and the centre of his consciousness moves to God. Devotion to the Lord means to him that He is important, He is the centre of all his activities and the devotee's mind and body, are just the means whom He uses for His joy of creativity.\*

मौहे पार्थ करता गिने, जाने ईश्वर मोहि ।
 प्रकृति छोड मों पुरुष को, ध्यान घरे जो सोहि ।।
 जो जगत विषे मोकों लखे, अरु जगत मेरे माहे ।
 हूँ ईश्वर सबको आदि दे, सो जोगी पोहोचे ताहें ।। (अ०९)

#### COMMENTS

We have now before us the Gita's categorisation of souls which is of great importance from the view point of the psychological analysis of the multi-dimensional behaviour of the jivas. Two kinds of created beings are there in this world: the divine and the worldly, the Daivy and the Asuri. The divine heritage is destined eventually for liberation and the worldly for eternal bondage. Krishna says: I throw these worldly souls, the jiva-sristi of Navrang Swami, in the transmigrating wombs of the devilish births and they move from life to life without ever coming to Me, i.e. without final liberation and are ultimately reduced to the most wretched condition. In fact, they are created only to run the show of this worldly stage and destory it as and when it is needed so that the drama of life goes on and on.

Even if these worldly souls happen to know of the wisdom of the holy books, their basic worldly nature is such that they would perform sacrifices and worship deities out of ostentation, self-conceit and arrogance. They can therefore be classified into three types: (1) the SATTVIC who worship the gods and reach the Devalokas, though eventually to return the wheel of this world, since upto Brahmaloka the entire creation is Kshara, perishable and those who attain to it have to come back to this world again and again, (ii)the RAJASIC who go to the Yakshas, the planes of smaller deities and Pitras, (iii) the TAMASIC who whorship either the ghosts or the elements such as fire, water, trees, etc. Even the atheists who consider the physical elements to be the basic constituents of this universe, can be included in this third type. For to them, desire takes the place of God. They observe that men have desires, that they become happy if they are fulfilled and unhappy if they are frustrated. Naturally the conclusion drawn by these Tamasic worldly souls is that desire is the creator of happiness, that it sustains the life by connecting it from one pleasure to another.

Thus, in the absence of discrimination between what is real and unreal, the worldly souls (Jivasristis) think that the physical

body and its nourishments are the only job worth attending to. Many of them entertain the belief that the meanest of the deities would fulfil their desires, if they offer wine, flesh etc. to them. Some perform sacrifices to higher deities but for the purpose of worldly achievement or heavenly bliss. They would give wealth in charity, but this would be to their flatterers or to show their arrogance and glory. Behind these worldly souls is a mechanical impetus of Para-Shakti of Akshara Purusha which makes them act like the blind driving of a machine unobservant of anything except the groove in which it is set to spin, not even conscious of the law of that motion.

The ego in nature is a reflection of the consciousness of Akshara Purusha. There are two selves in us, the lower self of the ego which being a part of Nature or Kshara Purusha, changes helplessly within the workings of nature, and the higher self which is the witnessing bird and the eternal part of Akshara (ममेंच अंश सनातन:). The freedom, therefore, lies not in nature and its ego, but in the higher self of Akshara Purusha. Since the higher self is an eternal part of Akshara Purusha, there is an underlying unity of Akshara's spiritual consciousness pervading all the higher selves. "They are strung like pearls upon a thread of that unity." Akshara is like a world-soul present in every higher self by essence and in every lower self by reflection.

The lower self is Jiva, a product of Kshara and the higher self is Atman, the product of Akshara, both combined in the drama of world becomes Jivatma, the soul. The world-soul Akshara is the sustainer of this drama of world-creation. As a spectator Akshara accepts the presentation of the play in each soul. The moment He withdraws the sanction in any soul, the action of that soul comes to a stop in nature. From Him only that power proceeds, which assumes the lower form of nature on the one hand and on the other the higher form of Para-Prakriti which becomes the multiplicity of souls. Both forms of nature combined perform the dance of creation that works on the principle, GUNA GUNESHU VARTANTE i. e. the qualities spring from qualities in a mechanical manner. Thus extends the determinism of nature, in which all existences follow the mechanism of their individual nature.

Hence so long as our ego functions, we cannot have free will.

As long as we are subject to the mechanism (gunas) of nature, there can be for us no freedom. Even those who have sublimated personality of high morals or intellectual attainments are still carried on a wheel of Sattvic form of nature. We may then say that there are two lives one can lead: the life of the ego, the lower self of desire, engrossed in the workings of nature, or the life of the egoless free, the universal spirit, in whom established the ego ceases to identify itself with the bodies of nature and instead recovers its spiritual self-existence in freedom of Akshara. Then alone does it enjoy the free will of the Divinity playing with the drama of creation.

Navrang Swami here draws our attention to one more secret and subtle aspect of the higher truth. He says that there are some higher souls, different from the lower self and the higher self. They are not the eternal parts of Akshara, but rather have descended in Akshara's world-dream straight from the abode of Purushottam, for a relish of Akshara's creation. So there are three types of creation of beings: (i) the higher souls descending from the abode of Uttam Purusha (ii) the divine souls emanating from Akshara Purusha, and (ii) the worldly souls created by Kshara Purusha for putting up its show of creation. These letter ones are so created by Kshara Purusha (Adi-Narayan) that they always lead away from their universal potentiality and blindly drive towards their bondage to the ego.

Even in his last message as recorded by the Bhagavata, Krishna says: That which is tied to ignorance is always bound, while that which is full of knowledge is eternally free. The latter is the wise one and is like a man awakened from dream. Even though in the body, he is not of it unlike the unwise type who, even though not in the body, is yet of it like one seeing a dream.\*

<sup>\*</sup> यो अविद्या युक् स तु नित्यबद्धो विद्यामयो यः स तु नित्यमुक्तः ॥ देहस्थोऽपि न देहस्थो विद्वान् स्वप्नाद् यथो उत्थितः । अदेहस्थोऽपि देहस्थः कुमतिः स्वप्नदृग् यथा ॥ (श्री मद्भागवत, उद्धव गीता ६/७-५)

Arjuna is of the divine nature. He need not grieve, says Krishna, with the thought that by acceptance of battle and slaughter he will be yielding to the impulses of the demoniac. Since he is born in the divine kind, he will develop in himself the Sattvic being and then come to a point where he has to transcend the three gunas, including the Sattvic nature, too. For the divine souls are bound for liberation, a sort of transformation into the likeness of the divine being.

To such souls, Krishna says, it is a dream that you are in this world, the reality is that you exist in the Divine and have never moved from the very centre of existence, from God. You are there. You may have been dreaming for millions of lives but you are essentially what you are. Just a jerk is needed, just someone to shock you and suddenly the dream disappears; the entire dreamland, New York and New Delhi all that disappears. You then realise that there is no birth and death; it is just that a body has been chosen for a while, and again you abandon it like old clothes and enter a new one.

#### LIFE AFTER DEATH

If we can become alert in hunger, we can see how our body searches for the right place to have our food. The same happens after death: our mind is in search of a womb, a right house or a right place of existence. In fact, death is such a remarkable experience that we cannot compare it with anything in life. Our whole life has been endeavouring to reach it. Life is spread out over a hundred years, but death occurs in a single moment; it is so intense an experience. Therefore, one should not be afraid of it. People die in an unconscious state on account of fright. They miss the whole experience.

Human life is full of the play of Sanskaras which are tendencies developed by repeated actions. Whatever goes on around us day and night, all that leave impacts and build up certain particular tendencies in the mind. If we had a quarrel with someone and friendship with the others, the impression of the quality of our relationship lasts, our life becomes a bundle of such impressions. In the last moments of life the self begins to get a clear and complete picture of this final shape of the impressions and whatever portion in these impressions predominates, it sometimes becomes a last wish of the dying person. If one desires to eat something as the last wish, we

may take it that all his life he has trained himself but to please the palate. All that he has laid up in a long journey of earthly life is a taste for eating and drinking; this is the sum of all the impressions he carries over. If a dying mother thinks of her child, it is a conclusive proof that her strongest impression is love of her child. Thus the thoughts arising in the final moment is the fruit of the whole of one's life. Such thought, Krishna says, prevails in the succeeding birth. The self sets out for the journey ahead with this provision for the way. Taking today's earnings with him he thus begins for tomorrow.

When a person dies, he escapes from the physical body made up of five elements, namely earth, air, water, fire and ether. But his death does not absolve him from his union with the other subtle elements like mind, ego, reason and the other qualities of perception such as sound, touch, sight, taste and smell. All these elements are subtle and the body formed out of them is called the subtle body, the Sukshma-Sharir. At the time of death, this subtle body enveloping the jiva leaves and compels him to take birth in different sphere.

When the king wishes to depart, the particular leaders of the kingdom approach him unbidden simply by knowing that he wishes to go, so do all the organs approach the departing self at the time of death. The subtle elements approach him when the breathing becomes difficult knowing that he wishes to depart. They do not go at the command of the departing man. They go of their own accord knowing the wish of their commander. If he has a good store of virtuous deeds and knowledge that would take him to the sun, the self leaves the body through the eye. He leaves through the head if he is entitled to the world of Hiranyagarbha i.e. Brahmaloka. He leaves through other passages according to his past work and knowledge.

So long as Prana pulls up and Apana pulls down the life-force there is continuity of life. But as soon as either of these becomes weaker, there is an exit of life-force. If the Apana gives way then the self will pass out of the upper parts of the body; and if the Prana gives way then he will pass out of the lower part of body such as anus. The self passes out in a subtle body like a mist. This subtle body, like a bladder of a football, is an exact counterpart of the

physical body. The Gita says that as soon as the physical body is cast off, man's consciousness is shifted to the subtle body which is composed of subtle elements like ether etc. as well as mind, intellect and ego. It contains the impressions of all past Karmas. The Karma which gives rise to the new being is like a mirror, through the agency of which the image of the man is reflected. This body journeys to the higher worlds and eventually reincarnates again on the earth or any other planet. Thus, this subtle body stays till one attains to knowledge and self-realisation. Consequent upon self-realisation the subtle body, like the physical body, also disintegrates and its components get involved in the ocean of Apara-prakriti.

Those persons, who neither desire heaven nor have performed such evil deeds by which they may be subjected to hell, are not detained and are reborn on the earth among human beings, choosing rich or poor, healthy or sick, parents according to their deeds.¹ The Hindu Puranas speak of the soul's birth in animals. Though such statements may be in some cases metaphorical like the description of the hell-fires with the sole object of deviating the human action from the bad to the good, yet there may be some rare instances also where the human soul should take a lower birth either as a wolf or as a pig just as in the physical world a murderer awaits his exit through the doors of the gallows. If a man is endowed with devilish traits and develops highly brutal tendencies behaving worse than an animal, the animal birth may prove to be the best for him. But if the soul is to suffer, he can suffer more in the body of a human being such as a leper or a crippled than in the body of an animal.

But most of the people, before being born on the earth, pick up a radiant subtle body after death and normally go to Yama-loka and Pitra-loka, i.e. the world of the fore-fathers. It is also termed as Chandra-loka where the self seeks the full gratification of worldly desires. The soul when he passes out of the body is known as 'Preta', that is, he takes up the garb of a traveller to the higher worlds. At first, the soul normally remains either unconscious or conscious in the form of a ghost for ten days hovering about his original and familiar places.

<sup>1.</sup> Yajurveda, Brh. Upanishad, 6. 2. 9-13

The Theosophists and even the ancient Egyptians have also spoken about a "double" made up of ether much like a shadow of the body. This double remains as long as the body remains. Hence the old Egyptians and Chaldeans preserved the body, thinking that it will keep the soul intact. They took recourse to mummification of the bodies of the dead. For, according to them, the double remained only so long as the body remained. If the corpse was destroyed, the departed soul must also perish. The soul after death wandered about freely all over the world, and returned to the place where the corpse was kept with intense thirst and hunger. Thus those ancients could never entirely dissociate the idea of the soul from the corpse of the departed, though they did believe in a kind of twin souls of the deceased, one proceeding to the immortal gods and the other remaining near the physical body.

However, the sages of India and also of many other countries could know much more about the onward march of the departed soul. Hence they cremate the dead body, so that the departed spirit may no more hover round his corpse and quickly march towards the higher worlds of the ancestors.

As soon as the man casts off his physical body and comes into the shape of the etheric double, another 'Preta-body' or the Linga-Sharir begins to take shape from day to day with the formation of head, eyes and other limbs. The jiva is fully embodied in the 'Preta-body' on the eleventh day. He starts on his journey to Yama-loka and spends nearly one year's time in Yama-loka. There, Chitragupta, the recorder of fate, the Accountant General in the kingdom of Lord Yama, informs the jiva of his good and bad actions in his earthly life. The jiva then casts off his Pretatva, i.e., the garb of a traveller and is raised to the status of a Pitri i.e., an ancestor in his astral body.

Then he goes forth upon the ancient pathways whereon the old forefathers have gone before him. There the soul looks on both the kings, God Varuna and Yama enjoying their sacred food and comforts.<sup>2</sup> This place is provided to the soul by his forefathers and

<sup>2.</sup> Rigveda, 10.14.7

Yama the king bestows on him the place to rest in adorned<sup>1</sup>. Yama first finds for everyone a place to dwell in and this fortune cannot be taken away from him. Thus everyone treads his own path that leads him where his ancient fathers have departed.<sup>2</sup>

Two paths of fathers and of gods are heard of and mortal beings travel on either of these two paths.<sup>3</sup> Agni Devta is said to be well acquainted with the path of fathers (Pitrayan) as it takes the soul to Pitraloka<sup>4</sup> along it. Some of the gods such as Varuna and Soma are said to be residing in Pitraloka in company with Yama who is the king of Pitraloka.<sup>5</sup> This Pitraloka is of three tiers: the highest, the middle and the lowest, where the three grades of fathers retire according to the merits of their decals.<sup>6</sup> Pitraloka is beyond the realm of the sun and the fathers enjoy a continued life full of all enjoyments and free from sorrow.<sup>7</sup>

There is another path known as Devayana which leads to the world of gods. Those who have neither the desire to be born on earth nor to lead a life of felicity in the company of the fathers in heaven, have quite a different lot from that of the category of souls mentioned above. They instead of desiring anything, meditate on their true nature. They, therefore, in want of a certain desire to enjoy something special, do not go after death to such places where there are objects of sensuous pleasures. They straight go to the world of gods, from the world of gods into the sun, from the sun into the world of light and then they go to Brahma-loka where they live for ever and do not return from that place (of course in this creation). There they further try for their spiritual upliftment and are, ultimately, merged into Akshara Brahman.8

<sup>1.</sup> Rigveda, 10.14.9

<sup>2.</sup> Rigveda, 10.14.2

<sup>3.</sup> Rigveda 10.88.15

<sup>4.</sup> Rigveda 10.2.7

<sup>5.</sup> Rigveda, 10.3.7; 10.135. 1, 7

<sup>6.</sup> Rigveda 10.6.6; 10.15.1

<sup>7.</sup> Rigveda 10.27.1

<sup>8.</sup> Yajurveda, Brh. Upanishad, 6.2.15

Thus the other world to which we go after death consists of a number of spheres representing various shades of luminosity of consciousness and happiness for which our spiritual conditions have fitted us of late. There has been an attempt in the West also to study the problem of death and the subsequent state of the spirit. In many universities and important cities various Psychical Research Societies have come into existence and their sole task is to gather all such evidences that can throw light on the survival of life after death and the para-psychological phenomena of human mind. Sir Oliver Lodge, who is regarded as the father of such movement in the West and was the first scientist who formed the Psychical Research Society in London was of the opinion that occurrences considered to be as occult could be examined and reduced to order by the methods of science and that personality persisted beyond death. "The evidence to my mind," as he observed, "goes to prove that discarnate intelligence, under certain conditions, may interact with us, on the material side, thus indirectly coming within our scientific ken."

Following the footsteps of Sir Oliver Lodge, the modern tendency in the West is to speculate more and more on the life after death, to establish contacts with disembodied spirits by table-tiltings, spirit-taps, slate-writings, card-liftings tin-trumpetings, planchette-writings, Ouija board manipulatings, and communications through media. A voluminous literature is being written on the subject both in the West as well as in the East. Certain parapsychological phenomena have roused a great curiosity in the minds of present day intellectuals.

The disembodied spirits have been found doing portraitpainting and typing. Many of them have materialised themselves in the seances and melt away in a mist-like white substance. At so many places people have heard the noise of the pencil during automatic slate-writing and have also felt a gentle shock while the spirit writes on the slate. The spirits have baffled many a man by placing their hands on him and catching hold of his shirt, tie etc. There have been records of cases where dying persons who have very strong attachment to their children have projected their etheric body after death and have given messages.

But it has been noticed that such spirits travelling in their etheric bodies have no knowledge of the highest truth. Mostly they are foolish, deceitful and ignorant. Being earth-bound they are always eager to control the mediums and pretend to know everything regarding the planes beyond the earth. They often speak falsehood and put on the appearance of some other spirit known to the spirit-communicators who, therefore, waste their time, energy and money in the vain hope of obtaining their favour and transcendental knowledge through them. As a matter of fact, the last thoughts of such spiritualists will be thoughts of dead spirits of inferior kind and hence they will only enter the region of those spirits after their death. Communication with the spirits will mar their onward march to higher blissful regions and make them earthbound. Those who offer themselves to become the mediums lose their vital energy, life force, intellectual power and the power of self-control over their inner higher bodies. Thus we create our destiny after death through our thoughts and deeds. The spirits who establish contacts with men in seances are not of higher kind as the spiritualists are led to believe on account of the trick played by those spirits. Therefore, we should try to know the highest truth of life by gaining which we may not have to go to the dark worlds of the spirits and not even to the pleasure-filled spheres of the Devas from where we have to come back to the earth. We should instead reach that state where there is no more birth, no more death.

There are such souls who have realised the highest truth and who do not go anywhere. Their breath, after death, merges into universal breath and they, without going anywhere, merge into Atman. Being Brahman-conscious they go to Brahman, that is to say, their worldly dream is broken right here itself.<sup>1</sup>

Assimilation of all kinds of experiences is done by them completely. Hitherto the soul required various types of experiences of poverty and riches, of purity and pollution, of ignorance and knowledge. He needed experiences of both the sexes as well. In a single body all this was not possible to assimilate. Living in the same body, he could not have grown beyond the earthly bonds and ties

<sup>1.</sup> Ibid, 4.4.6; 4.4.12.13

of attachment. Therefore, by virtue of necessity he died and was born again and again under different circumstances for a different set of experiences. This process, however, has now been exhausted for the realised self and the Karmic purgation has occurred to him in which the oppressor and the oppressed have been able to forgive each other in him.

From this graphic description of the three types of souls, says Navrang Swami, it is clear that each type has its wealth, its specific role in the drama of creation to play. Since the whole creation itself is a sport of God, the creation has to be sustained by its permanent actors who could enjoy their existence of delusion in the egoism of their glory and power and in violence of their wrath. "Today I have gained this object of desire, tomorrow I shall have that other; today I have acquired so much wealth, more I will gain tomorrow. I have killed this enemy, the rest too I shall destroy. I am a king and leader of men; I am perfect, accomplished and a privileged enjoyer of the world, I am so knowledgeable, so wealthy and strong, I am of high birth; who is there like unto me? I will sacrifice, I will give, I will enjoy," occupied by such multitude of desires, devoured by passion and lust, and bound by a hundred bonds of worldly relations, they become the most successful players of the game of life. They could be easily recognised in the world, as they never seek Him and never think of being rescued from this world. Then there are worlds in supraphysical planes as well where there are constant types of beings known as Ishvarisristi which support the complete divine plan of creation indispensable to the march of the universe.

Seeing the very few souls, perhaps once in a million leading towards that movement of liberation on which the Gita lays so much stress, it is observed by Navrang Swami that the Gita does not describe in a great detail the mystery of the highest Reality, Rahasyam Uttamam. It leaves that for the seeker to discover by his own spiritual experience. It only points out the highest reality of Purushottam and the Supreme path of exclusive devotion through which this supreme mystery has to be reached. This is the way offered to the Higher souls (Brahman-sristi) of His eternal abode, as they alone are nearest to Him and take the greatest delight in their oneness with Him.

This knowledge comes, says the Gita, by a highest Avyabhicharini Bhakti, a devotion of a loyal woman's helpless longing for her separated husband. Therefore to the higher souls the message of Krishna is to constantly remember Purushottam with exclusive devotion, not thinking of anything else, not even Akshara. For, after all, Akshara is merely an infinitesimal aspect of Purushottam, the Absolute. Akshara which is also spoken of in the Gita as the imperishable unmanifest is actually the supreme goal of the jivas that are the eternal parts of Him. In navrang's philosophy such souls are known as 'Ishvari-sristi'.

And those higher souls who are known as 'Brahman-sristi' and who have descended in this creation from the supreme abode, the Param-dham of Purushottam, are bound for attainment to the Supreme alone. The path prescribed for them is none other than the path of exclusive devotion (अन्त्य अव्यक्तिचारिणी भक्ति) of a loving woman's heart. "Such a devotee comes to know Me, who and how much I am and in all the reality and principles of my being," says Krishna. Then the beloved becomes one with her lover; one with the eternal disporter in his self-knowledge and self-experience; one with Him in His being, consciousness and bliss (Sat-Chit-Anand); one with Him in his will and world-impulse; one with Him in His universe and in His unity with all creatures in the universe. This is the culmination of the highest Bhakti that is at the core of the supreme secret, the Guhytamam mystery of soul's existing in her eternal transcendence.

## Chapter III

#### Akshara's Drama of Creation

The knowledge by which one realises that all the things are the manifestations of only one spiritual substance is called 'Jnana.' The knowledge by which one understands how the various things evolve one by one out of the one substance is called 'Vijnana.' Let us, therefore, see what the 'Vijnana' or the scientific analysis has to inform us about the cosmic form which actually Arjuna saw with his divine eyes.

According to modern science there was one substance in the beginning. This substance was in great motion. As the motion slowed down, the heat of the original substance became less and the substance got condensed. As a result of this condensation the stars, the sun and the planets came into being. Our planet earth was also originally a very hot ball same as the sun, but as it gradually lost its motion and heat, portions of it became air, water and rocks on which evolved the principle of life.

The three qualities of motion, heat and attraction that are prominent in modern sciences, are described by the Gita as the three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas of Nature. When Nature remains in its state of dissolution, all the three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas remain in their balanced state during the night of the creator Brahma. The aspect of the Divinity which executes the process of creation and dissolution is termed by the Gita as 'Brahma' who is also personified as having his day of creation and night of dissolution. At the commencement of the day of Brahma the balance of the three qualities of Nature is disturbed; like a folding fan the folds of Nature open out. The creator is inspired with the desire of creation. Nature, hitherto silent and sleeping, is vitalised by the principle of reason (Sankalpa) and its first vitalised form is called 'Mahat'.

Although, perceptible reason enters imperceptible Nature, Nature still remains homogeneous. Later this homogeneity is broken up and individuation of things takes place as in the case of mercury which while falling on the ground is broken up into small globules. The process of individuation is known as Ahankar, expressed

by recognition 'I and you'. The individuation that takes place in a man or an animal, and the individuation by reason of which atoms, water and solid rocks spring out are of the same kind. The only difference is that the stone is not self-conscious, i. e. it has not got the mouth to say 'I and you.'

Modern scientists have divided the substances into solid, liquid and gaseous forms but the Gita's classification is different. It says that man acquires knowledge of all worldly objects by means of five organs of perception. As a result there are only the five categories of objects of perception: namely, sound, touch, sight, taste and smell. One cannot add the number of sense-properties to five. Even if we imagine that there are more than five such properties, we have no means to perceive them.

Modern biologists say that the most minute fundamental globular micro-organisms have only the organ of skin, and that from that skin other physical organs have come into being one by one. They say, for instance, that the eyes came into existence as a result of contact of light with the skin of the original micro-organism. In the Mahabharat also there is a description of the growth of the organs on the same lines: "When the soul in a living being gets the desire of hearing sound, the ears come into existence; when it gets desire of preceiving colour, the eyes are formed; when it gets the desire of smelling, the nose is created."

But all these organs of perception are the various doors of mind, the perceiver. Hence the Gita mentions only the five elements which are the objects of perception, and not the five organs of perception which could be included under the term "mind." Krishna says: the five elements, the mind, the ego and the principle of reason is His eight-fold Nature. This is a lower form of Nature, Apara-Prakriti. There is also His higher form of Nature, which is Para-Prakriti and which becomes the souls in the drama of creation and upholds the world-process. "Prakriti is My form." (9/8) "The soul is a part of Me".(15/7) Para-Nature of Akshara Purusha is not in essence the soul but it becomes the soul, and behind its manifestation it is higher and something else. The unity of Apara and Para Nature is therefore the greater truth, the multiplicity is the lesser or phenomenal truth. It is by the unity of both the Natures that the world is sustained.

यदक्षरं वेदिविदः वदिन्ति विश्वन्ति यद्यतयः वीतरागाः । यत् इच्छन्तः ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत् ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥ यथा आकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगः महान् । तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानि इति उपधारय ॥ (८/११,९/६)

I shall briefly describe to you that Reality which the knowers of the Veda call Akshara, which ascetics freed from passion enter, and desiring which they lead a life of celibacy. As mighty air moving everywhere always abides in ether, know thou that in the same manner all existences abide in Me.

Akshara is that aspect of the Absolute which is concerned with the rise and fall of the multiple universes. But the universes are not Akshara Brahman in all His utter reality but a single expression, a free but a minor motion of His being. In the infinite vastness of the Real, the arena of disturbances of the universes is only a negligible area, and even there, the relationship between the changeable and the unchangeable substratum is the relationship between the fickle breeze and the infinite space. The ascetics who consider the attainment of Akshara's universal consciousness as the goal of their life, practise celibacy and withdraw themselves completely from the life of passion, so that they may be born into a new consciousness, where object and subject dissolve, the seed of karma is burnt up and the knower and the known are no more.\*

तत्व दर्शी वैराग्य दृढ़, वितरागी है सोय।
असंग शस्त्र करके छेदे, जगत मूल यह मोय।।
होय अक्षर के निमिष तें, अनंत कोटि ब्रह्मांड।
उपजे खपे निमिष में, अक्षर सदा अखंड।। (अ०१५)
प्रकृति मेरी चैतन्य रूप, है आकाशवत तेह।
यह रहत भूत सब ता विषे, बीज करम को लेह।। (अ०११)

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम् । कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजामि अहम् ।। प्रकृतिं स्वां अवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः । भूतग्रामं इमं कृत्स्नं अवशं प्रकृतेः वशात् ॥ (९/७-८)

Arjuna, at the end of the cycle, all beings pass into Nature which is My own; and at the beginning of the cycle, I send them forth. Laying hold of My nature, I bring forth again and again all this multitude of beings which are helpless being under the control of Nature.

The act of fertilising the Prakriti to grow up into the tree of the universe is an act of grace from Brahman who coordinates His two natures, the Apara-prakriti of the elements and the Para-prakriti of the selves. This is done again and again in an endless cycle of creation and dissolution. The Para-nature of Akshara is not in essence the soul, and behind its manifestation it is higher and something else. The unity of Apara and Para natures is therefore the greater truth, the multiplicity is the lesser or phenomenal truth. It is by the unity of both the natures that the world is sustained. This then is the key-note, the whole world multitudinously divided and yet unified in the body of God of gods. There is a divine will in every atom, though in a mechanical form. The enlightened man's vision is, therefore, no longer deluded by the mask of the two forms of Nature; it detects behind them the supreme Godhead.\*

हूं जोग करूं दोऊ प्रकृति को, तब जगत होय सब। करूं वियोग जब दोऊ को, सब प्रलय होय तब।। (अ, ११) दोऊ प्रकृति को जोग कर, करूँ जगत ये जब। चैतन्य प्रकृति लेऊँ काढ़ के, प्रलय करूँ मैं तब।। यातें करता हूँ सबन को, पारथ है परमान। उत्तपती प्रलय मैं करूं, दोऊ प्रकृति कर जान।। (अ०१०)

भूमि: आप: अनल: वायुः खं मनः बुद्धिः एव च । अहंकारः इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिः अष्टघा ।। अपरेयं इतः तु अन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् । जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ।। (७/४-५)

Earth, water, air, ether, mind, understanding and the ego-this is the eight-fold division of My nature. This is My lower nature; the other than this is My higher nature which is in the form of soul, and by which the whole universe is sustained.

Once the individual comes to understand clearly the distinction between matter and spirit, he will indeed understand that spirit identifying with matter is a process which requires coordination by Ishvara in the beginning of each creation. Matter is known as the lower nature of Ishvara and the element of consciousness is called the higher nature of Him. These two remain separate in their unmanifest form with Ishvara in Pralaya. But with the dawn of creation the two are put in contact with each other by Ishvara; and the mind-body equipment of matter begins to function the moment the spark of conscious soul embraces it. The lower nature of Apara-prakriti unpacks itself and spreads out in the form of earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, understanding and the ego; the higher nature of Para-prakriti manifests its universal consciousness in individual units of souls embodied by the body-mind equipment.\*

<sup>\*</sup> कहों ज्ञान सुन सो सबे, मो ईश्वर निज सरूप।
प्रकृति दोय मेरी सदा, कहों ताको भिन्न-भिन्न रूप।।
भूमि जल तेज वायु खं, मन बुद्धि मोह अहंकार।
ये जड़ प्रकृति तें होत है, पिंड ब्रह्मांड विस्तार।।
याकें परे चैतन्य रूप, प्रकृति दूसरी जेह ।
व्यापी पिंड ब्रह्मांड में, आतम रूपी तेह ।।
आकासवत व्याप रही, रही जगत को घार।
ये जो इन सब भूत की, लख पारथ निरघार।। (अ० १०)

ऊर्ध्वमूलं अधः शाखं अश्वत्थं प्राहुः अव्ययम् । छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यः तं वेद सः वेदवित् ॥ अधः च ऊर्ध्वं प्रसृताः तस्य शाखा गुणप्रवृद्धाः विषयप्रवालाः । अधरच मूलानि अनुसंततानि कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥ (१५/१-२)

This creation is an imperishable tree having its roots above and branches below. Its leaves are the Vedas and he who knows this is the knower of the Vedas. Its branches extend below and above, nourished by the three gunas, with sense objects for its twings. Below in the world of men, stretch forth other secondary roots in the form of ego, binding the soul according to his action.

When the two natures, the lower and the higher combine, the tree of multiplicity springs forth from Akshara and spreads out in the form of the universe. But since it has sprung from the Higher Reality it keeps its roots up in the divine consciousness from where it receives its nourishment till the end of the cycle. The larger the number of branches and leaves, the greater is the tree's dimension and growth. For this tree of the universe, knowledge is the leaves. More knowledge a generation acquires, the clearer becomes its vision of a greater area. With this knowledge follow the multifarious types of activities of the jiva who then tastes the experiences of the fruits that grow in course of time. The whole of the existence of Nature becomes the field of the jiva's projection of his desire-fulfilling dreams.\*

<sup>ये वृक्ष रूप संसार को, ऊरध मूल अपार।
पत्र वेदक छन्द है, साखा गुन निरधार ॥
है पेड़ या वृक्ष को, ईश्वर रूप जो आय।
त्रगुन सरूप साखा भई, समझ देखो कोऊ जाय॥
पत्र फूल फल वृक्ष को, कहे वेद के करम।
बँघे जीव ता स्वाद को, लोका लोक के घरम॥ (अ० १५)</sup> 

न रूपं अस्य इह तथा उपलभ्यते न अन्तः न च आदिः न च संप्रतिष्ठा । अश्वत्थं एनं सुविरूढ - मूलं असंगशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा ॥ ततः पदं तत् परिमार्गितव्यं यस्मिन् गताः न निवर्तन्ति भूयः । तमेव च आद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥ (१५/३-४)

But its real form is not thus perceived here, nor its end nor beginning nor its foundation. So cut off this firm-rooted tree with the strong sword of non-attachment. Then that goal should be sought after, where having gone, none returns again; and seek refuge in that Prime Purusha from which streamed forth the ancient current of all activity.

Since this tree of life springs from ignorance, it simply appears in the substratum of the Reality, but it itself has no trace of any reality. Hence, it can be annihilated by dispelling the ignorance that is the cause of its appearance. Identification of spirit with matter is responsible for the growth of this tree and the withdrawal of this identification could therefore be the end of it. The enlightened ones just do this only. They think of the source from which the tree springs and draws its nourishment and with the axe of detachment they cut down the tree of multiple experiences to reach the abode to which men go and nevermore return. The finite consciousness thus regains itself through the worldly process into the infinite bliss-consciousness, and the eternal longing of the relativity seeks its fulfilment in the Absolute continuum.\*

(अ० १४

णो है असंग या वृक्ष ते, तत्व दर्सी ते आय । असंग शस्त्र ते पास है, छेदे मूल ते जाय ॥ छेदे जबही शस्त्र कर, विश्व विराट को मूल । तब पावे मारग परे, तो मिटे मूल की भूल ॥

अन्यक्तात् न्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्ति अहरागमे । राज्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्र एव अन्यक्त संज्ञके ॥ परः तस्मात् तु भावः अन्यः अन्यक्तः अन्यक्तात् सनातनः । यः सः सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥ (८/१८, २०)

At the coming of Brahma's day, all embodied things come forth from the unmanifest Prakriti; at the commencement of his night, they merge in the same subtle body of Brahma, called the unmanifest Prakriti. But beyond this, there is yet another unmanifested Eternal Being who does not perish even when all existences perish.

There is an eternal cycle of alternating periods of cosmic manifestation and non-manifestation, a day and a night of the creator, each of equal length of time for a thousand ages. In other words, Akshara Purusha, the world creating aspect of the Supreme, has His two forms, namely the manifest which is perceptible to the eyes, and the unmanifest Nirakar, imperceptible to the eyes. Kshara Purusha is the manifest form of the unmanifest Maya of Akshara Purusha. The unmanifest form of Maya is a store-house of dormant capacities, inclinations and tendencies that come to project forth when they wake up. These tendencies indicate the incapacity of an individual (the Jiva-sristi) to disinherit himself from his past that lies buried in the unmanifest. But the realm of the unmanifest also undergoes change whenever it comes in contact with the world of manifestation and reacts to it. There, however, exists higher than this unmanifest, another unmanifested Reality of Akshara Purusha which is eternal and imperishable.\*

हे दिवस जुग सहस्र को, रात सहस्र जुग होय।
 प्रलय नैमित्तिक होय तबे, ब्रह्मा सैन विषे होय।। (अ०१४)
 ये अक्षार अर्घ मूल लों, जब होय नास निरवार।
 तब प्रलय होय व्यक्त रूप को, रहे अव्यक्त अखंड अपार।।
 होय महाप्रलय उर्घ मूल लों, तब क्षर पुरुष होय नास।
 होय लीन प्रकृति पुरुष, रहे अक्षर पुरुष अविनास।। (अ०१४)

अव्यक्तः अक्षरः इति उक्तः तं आहुः परमां गितम् । यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तत् धाम परमं मम ।। ब्रह्मणः हि प्रतिष्ठा अहम् अमृतस्य अव्ययस्य च । शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्य ऐकान्तिकस्य च ॥ (८/२१,१४/२७)

This unmanifested, spoken of as the imperishable Akshara, is called the supreme goal of the jivas; and My Supreme abode is that attaining to which man does not return. For I am the source of Brahman (Akshara), the immortal and the imperishable, of eternal law and of absolute bliss.

That which is called the unmanifested imperishable reality is indeed Akshara Brahman who is unchangeable and eternal. As the unchangeable substratum, Akshara Brahman is that zone of the Absolute Reality which sustains all the changing aspects of phenomenal reality. He is the highest goal of jivas, the jiva-sristis who are the permanent actors of the drama of Akshara and appear on the scene of the drama in every creation. But the abode of the Supreme Purusha is on a different zone attaining to which man does not return, for he leaves completely one plane of consciousness to enter entirely into another plane of consciousness. The dreamer ends his dream for good, when he wakes up to the zone of another reality of the Absolute's Bliss-consciousness.\*

<sup>\*</sup> अक्षर पुरुष अन्यक्त जो, है मेरो निजधाम।
चेतन प्रकृति मेरी जगत में, न्याप रही सब ठाम।। (अ० १५)
जो मुख एकांत आनन्दधन, सो उत्तम पुरुष को जान।
हों आश्रित ता मुख को, प्रगट करूँ निरवान।। (अ० १४)

ओम् इति एकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन् मां अनुस्मरन् । यः प्रयाति त्यजन् देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ।। अनन्यचेताः सततं यः मां स्मरति नित्यशः । तस्य अहं सुलभः पार्थं नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥ (८/१३-१४)

He who recites the one-syllabled OM, considering Brahman to be My aspect, attains the supreme goal of the jivas, after departing from his body. But to that yogi who constantly remembers Me with exclusive devotion, not thinking of anything else, I come Myself easily.

Om is the seed Mantra for attaining to Ishvara which is the highest goal of the Jiva-sristi. All the Vedas speak of this Pranava Upasana. Pranava in fact is the very seed of creation. It is Shabda-Brahman, the first reflection of Akshara's consciousness in its Prakriti. But the destination of the Tattvadarshi souls is altogether different, for they are the devotees of Purushottam and they have none else to look upon. To such souls no other Sadhana is required except their exclusive devotion to Him and then He Himself comes to them. The illusion that things exist in themselves apart from Him passes from them and there is revealed the hidden truth behind everything.

ये बीज अब्यक्त पुरुष को, कूटस्थ रूप है जेह।
महद कारन को पाय के, झलक्यो प्रकृति में तेह।।
ये प्रतिबिम्ब महद प्रकृति में, भयो प्रकृति अनुकूल।
प्रणव रूप ओं अक्षर है, सबको ऊरध मूल।। (अ०११)
इन सबथें न्यारे कहे, तत्व दरसी को सार।
कहे मतो इनको बड़ो, सब ज्ञान के पार।।
ते निज उत्तम पुरुष के, उत्तम भगत जे होय।
ते आश्रित उत्तम पुरुष के, स्वयं सिद्ध है सोय।। (अ०१७)

आ-ब्रह्म-भुवनात् लोकाः पुनः आवर्तिनः अर्जुन ।
मां उपत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनः जन्म न विद्यते ।।
पुरुषः सः परः पार्थं भक्त्या लभ्यः तु अनन्यया ।
यस्य अन्तःस्थानि भूतानि योन सर्वं इदं ततम् ।।
(८/१६, २२)

From the Brahmaloka downwards all worlds are perishable and subject to rebirth; only on reaching Me, Arjuna, there is no return to birth again. Because I am that Supreme Purusha by whom all this is pervaded; and He can be attained by exclusive devotion to Him alone, and by no other means (which are described by Krishna in earlier chapters.)

Upto the realm of Brahmaloka all are subject to rebirth, because whatever is the product of the three gunas of Prakriti cannot be imperishable. Brahmaloka is the farthest limit of creation and those who reach it however may get one advantage, that is, they may not have to return to this world after the exhaustion of their merits and instead may merge with Akshara Brahman at the end of the present cycle of creation. But in another cycle of creation like other jivas and like Brahmaloka itself they will also have to return to the creation, since they have not transcended their present state of dreamy consciousness. Hence they shall remain, as ever, the part of the Para-prakriti stuff of creation. Only those who establish rapport with the Supreme Purushottam may attain to a level of experience from which there is no return to this dreamy consciousness.\*

<sup>\*</sup> त्रगुण देव को आदि दे, जाय देवलोक कोय। निश्चे करम करके फिरे, आवागमन में सोय।। हूं ईश्वर सबही देव को, मोको लखे न जान। यातें सबे अन्य देव को, भजे कामना मान।। ये त्रगुण स्वरुप को आदि दे, विभूति मेरी होय। मोको लखे न ये सबे, त्रगुण आद दे कोय।।

<sup>(</sup>अ०३)

<sup>(</sup>अ० १०)

एवं सततयुक्ताः ये भक्ताः त्वां पयुंपासते । ये च अपि अक्षरं अन्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः॥ मिय आवेश्य मनः ये मां नित्ययुक्ताः उपासते । श्रद्धया परयाः उपेताः ते मे युक्ततमाः मताः ॥ (१२/ १-२)

Arjuna asks Krishna which of the two are better versed in Yoga out of those devotees who, with their minds constantly fixed in you, worship you and those who worship the Nirakar Akshara Brahman. Krishna replies: those who, endowed with constant faith, fix their minds on Me and worship Me alone—them do I consider the most perfect in Yoga.

When Arjuna notes the distinction which Krishna points out between the worship of Akshara and the worship of Purushottam, he tries to clarify the point by himself asking a straight question: Who is better versed in Yoga out of the two, one worshipping the unmanifested Akshara and the other worshipping you, the Supreme Purusha. Krishna is very explicit on this point and says that one who worships Me is, of course, better and most perfect in Yoga. The Sadhana of the Nirakar Unmanifest is, first of all, difficult in its practicability. Secondly, the destination is the silence of the Universal void. How could it, therefore, compare favourably with the bliss-filled existence of the Absolute.\*

एक भजे भक्त जो तुमको, भक्ति भाव कर इष्ट।
 एक भजे अव्यक्त अक्षर को, ता दोय में को श्रेष्ट।।
 जो भक्त मेरो नित जो ग्रही, भजे भक्ति करि जेह।
 मन ताको मेरे विषे, मोमें प्राप्ति तेह ॥ (अ०१४)

ये तु अक्षरं अनिर्देश्यं अव्यक्तं पर्युपासते। सर्वत्रगं अचिंत्यं च कूटस्थं अचलं घ्रुवम्।। संनियम्य इन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः। ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मां एव सर्वभूतहिते रताः।। (१२/३-४)

Those, however, who worship Akshara as unmanifested, omnipresent, immovable and eternal Brahman, by restraining all the senses, being even-minded in all conditions, rejoicing in the welfare of all creatures—verily they also come unto Me.

One who controls all the dissipation of one's energy through senuous enjoyments and redirects the energies so conserved for the higher flight to Akshara's universal consciousness also reaches the Supreme. For Akshara is, in no way, different from Purushottam; He is only a partial imperishable manifestation of the Absolute. Nonetheless, the difference remains between the devotees of the two: the worshipper of the Purushottam awakens from this dream of creation and attains to true essence of the Supreme; whereas the worshipper of Brahman merges himself in the infinite consciousness of Akshara, i.e., the Sat aspect of the Sat-Chit-Anand Absolute and thus becomes inseparate with the Creator of multiple universes.\*

(अ० १४)

स्वेस काल सबथें रहित, अक्षर ब्रह्म रूप । मन बुद्धि इन्द्री पहुँचे नहीं, अव्यक्त अखंड अनूप।। करे इन्द्री निग्रह सबे, ध्यावे अक्षर को सोय। अक्षर लों पहुंचे सही, अन्त मोमें प्राप्त होय॥ जो अव्यक्त अक्षर ब्रह्म को, है स्वरूप स्वयं सिद्ध। हों स्वरूप की प्रतिष्ठा, कहूं अर्जुन ये विघ॥

क्लेशः अधिकतरः तेषां अव्यक्तासक्त-चेतसाम् । अव्यक्ता हि गतिः दुखं देहवद्भिः अवाप्यते ॥ ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः । अनन्येन एव योगेन मां ध्यान्तः उपासते ॥ तेषां अहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्यु - संसार - सागरात् ॥ (१२/५-७)

But greater is their trouble whose minds are set on the unmanifested, and their path is more rugged, for self-identification with the unmanifested is very hard to attain for those who are body-conscious. On the other hand, those who worship me, surrender all actions to me, regard me as the supreme goal and meditate on me with exclusive devotion I speedily deliver them from the ocean of birth and death.

Attaining to Akshara's universal consciousness is not an easy task for the embodied souls. The self bound to a body always thinks of the demands of the body even while repeating the words that everything is Brahman. One cannot attain to this great turth of life. Hence identification with the universal consciousness of Akshara is very hard to attain. On the other hand, Krishna says, for those souls who are not steeped in the mere knowledge of Akshara and have turned definitely from the pursuit of divinities other than the Highest Reality without any confusion about the status of the Supreme, the path of exclusive devotion (Ananya-bhakti) is the best. Ananya-bhakti is also an easier path. What is required is a change in outlook and a spirit of total surrender. Once this is done, the Lord takes care of the rest. When the devotee dedicates to him all his actions, good or bad, He absolves the devotee of all the consequences and purifies his mind. Soon a day comes when the transformation occurs in the level of his consciousness and he transcends the illusive phenomenal existence of his ego.

आतम परआतम को, तत्व ज्ञान होय ताय ।
तौ प्रकृति के गुन छोड़ कर, मेरे सरूप को पाय ॥
हूँ करता कारन सबन को, ये विभूति मेरी सब ।
जो लखे विभूति मेरी सबे, मोकों पावत तब ॥ (अ०१२)
ये भेद मेरो विश्वरूप को, तत्व दरसी सो आय ।
उत्तम भगत ते लखत हैं, आद अन्त इनको पाय ॥ (अ०१३)

ज्ञानयज्ञेन च अपि अन्ये यजन्तः मां उपासते । एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ यत् करोषि यत् अश्नासि यत् जुहोषि ददासि यत् । यत् तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत् कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ (९/१५, २७)

Some betake themselves to Me through their offering of knowledge, and worship Me as the One, their very self; while others worship Me thinking Me to be distinct from them and taking Me to be diverse in diverse celestial forms. But, Arjuna, what you should do is: whatever you eat, whatever you give away, whatever you practise as austerity, offer it all to Me.

No doubt the divinity of the Supreme pervades everywhere and the entire creation is a manifestation of His Lila. It is He only who has manifested Himself in Akshara, Ishvara, the Para and Apara Prakriti. But a mere intellectual understanding of this fact is not of much help to the analytical mind. A very simple approach is to realise that when the things do not exist in themselves and for themselves apart from the spiritual truth of the Lord's Lila, the mind should be called back from moment to moment to the sporting reality and the presence of Purushottam in all the activities. All the desires are offered to Him whose divine will flows through the devotee's mind undeflected by his own resolves and preferences.\*

<sup>करे कोइक सब मनुष्य में, इच्छा सिद्धि की जेह।
ता सिद्धि में सिद्धि कोइक, लखे तत्व निज तेह।। (अ० १०)
प्रकास मेरो सब क्षेत्र में, चैतन्य प्रकृति है तेह।
क्षेत्र क्षेत्रज्ञ प्रकृति दोऊ, है मेरी पारथ येह।। (अ० ११)
हूँ करता कारन सबको, ये विभूति मेरी सब।
जो लखे विभूति मेरी सबे, मोको पावत तव।। (अ० १२)
शुद्ध अन्तस्करन को, करम करे निरधार ।
ईश्वर विषे अरपन करे, अलप ही होय अपार।। (अ० ३)</sup> 

## COMMENTS

There have been many occultists of the Theosophy, the Lama tradition, the Rosicrucian, the Radhaswami and such other faiths who have talked about the seven or fourteen planes of existence of consciousness. Those who enumerate the number of planes as seven include the existence of demoniac beings in one of the seven planes; whereas those who mention the number of planes as fourteen count separately the seven states of creatures of baser existence. Navrang Swami, following the teachings of the Bhagavata as well as the actual occult experiences of his Guru Prannath, corroborated by his own also, speaks of the fourteen Lokas including the seven Adho-Lokas, the planes of darkness where the creatures of passions and demoniac beings dwell for the gratification of their lust and power; the other seven Lokas are higher planes of the divine beings, i.e. gods and demi-gods.

The soul takes his flight, after leaving the physical body, to these higher planes of the divine existence in course of his spiritual The worshippers of the elements, the nature spirits and the ghosts go to the Adho-Lokas of the ghosts and of the baser instincts. The worshippers of the ancestors and those living a life of the worldly pursuits like their ancestors go to the higher worlds of their ancestors. These worlds are known as Bhuvar-Loka. Those who, however, rise above the life of selfish pursuits and engage themselves in charities, philanthrophic deeds and sacrifices or yajnas go to still higher planes of Swarga-Loka. Leading an intellectual life of a scientist, a historian, a philosopher or a social reformer a man may rise to still higher mental planes known as Mahar and Jana Lokas. Those indulging in various types of penances and austerities go to Tapo-Loka, and those eagerly devoted to the worship of Narayana or the Pranava Sadhana of AUM or the practice of universalism of one Brahman reach the highest plane of cosmic existence, i.e. Sat-Loka or Vaikuntha. From here onwards extends the infinite abyss of the

void of Nirakar. The liberated souls seeking NIRVANA attains to this state.\*

There are seven bodies or, with a slightly different classification of the Upanishads, the five sheaths (Panch-Koshas) that act as vehicles in which the soul exists on the seven Lokas and in the void of the unmanifested reality of Nirakar. Those seven bodies are often described as physical, etheric, astral, mental, spiritual, cosmic and Nirvanic. Under the Upanishadic classification of the Panch-Koshas the physical is Annamaya Kosha, the etheric is the Pranamaya Kosha, the astral and the mental are the Manomaya Kosha, the spiritual is the Vijnanamaya Kosha, and the cosmic is the Anandamaya Kosha. The Nirvanic is the state of the explosion and annihilation of all the Koshas.

But as there are seven bodies or seven states of consciousness, so also are there seven dimensions of dreams posing a hindrance in knowing the seven states of consciousness. For example, on the physical level of earthly consciousness we see a statue in two ways, i.e. by perceiving it with physical eyes and by dreaming or imagining it with the mind. Similarly in astral, mental and spiritual bodies we can perceive dreams created by our own other-worldly faith or we can seek to know without any preconceptions. In the cosmic body on the seventh plane there is no mind; therefore there

<sup>\*</sup> लोक चौदे कहे वेद ने, सोई कतेब (बाइबल-कुरान) चौदे तबक (लोक)।
वेद कहे ब्रह्म एक है, कतेब कहे हक (परमात्मा) एक।।
सात लोक तले जिमी के, मृतलोक है तिन पर।
इन्द्र, रूद्र, ब्रह्मा बीच में, ऊपर विष्णु बैकुंठ घर।।
निराकार बैकुंठ पर, तिन पर अक्षर ब्रह्म।
अक्षरातीत ब्रह्म तिन पर, यों कहे ईसे (निजानवं जो) का इलम।।
ये वेवरा (वणंन) वेद कतेब का, दोनों की हकीकत।
इलम (ज्ञान) एक विध का, दोज की एक सरत (नियम)।।
सात तबक तले जिमी के, तिन पर है नासूत (पृथ्वी)।
तिन पर है कै फिरस्ते (देव), तिन पर है मलकूत (बैकुंठ)।।
ला-हवा (ज्ञून्य) मलकूत पर, ला पर नूर मकान (अक्षरधाम)।
नूर पार नूर-तजल्ला (अक्षरातीत), मैं तहां से ल्याया फुरमान (संदेश)।।
(महामित प्राणनाथ: खुलासा, प्रकरण १२)

is no one to think and dream. The individual becomes cosmic i.e. Brahman. So it is said that this world is a dream of Brahman. There is no duality here, no mirror now. The individual has been lost. You or I is no more; everything has been lost and comes to the original source, the cosmic seed or the cosmic egg. This is known in the Yogic language as Samadhi Sabeej—with seed. The tree of the universe is not, but the seed is from where the potential possibility of the world-dream of multiplicity springs up. The nearer we come to the centre of the seed, the radius-like two lines of dream and reality come closer. Therefore in the Nirvanic state these two lines of dream and real become one and nothingness remains in which there is absence of even the seed. This is the plane of formless Nirakara Brahman.

Acharya Rajneesh, who is said to be a modern occultist, describes the plane of Nirakar and its seventh Nirvanic body, under his classification, in a very illuminating manner: "The seventh body has its own dreams of nothingness, dreams of the void. The "yes" has been left behind, and even the "no" becomes living; even now the "no" is not a "no". The nothingness is not nothing; rather, nothingness is even infinite, because in a sense the positive cannot be infinite. The positive must have boundaries. However we think, however we conceive, the positive implies boundaries. Only the negative is the realm of "no boundary". So the seventh body has its own dreams; now there are no symbols, now there are no forms. Now the formless is. Now there is no sound but the soundless. "Now" is this silence. The dreams of silence are total unending."

"The seventh body is Nirvana, and the seventh tension is between Existence and Non-existence. In the sixth, the seeker has lost himself, but not the Existence. He is not as an individual, but as the cosmic Being. The Existence is. There are philosophies and systems that stop with the sixth.<sup>2</sup> They stop with God, they stop with Moksha (liberation). Seventh means to lose even the Existence into Non-existence. It is not losing oneself. It is just losing. The existential becomes Non-existence. Then you come to the source

<sup>1.</sup> Inward Revolution, Ch. IV, p. 84.

<sup>2.</sup> It is also known as Sat-loka or Vaikuntha.

from which all Existence comes and goes. This is the original source. The Existence comes out of it; Non-existence is going back into it—to the womb."<sup>3</sup>

This is a very beautiful description of the unmanifest Brahman of the Gita. According to Navrang, the above description would however relate to only that infinitesimal part of Akshara Brahman in which multiple universes rise and fall. The other three Padas or zones of Akshara Brahman are still the higher reality which is beyond human understanding. The Gita, therefore, makes only a passing reference to it as well as to the supreme reality of Akshara-tita who transcends even Akshara Purusha.

AUM is the symbol of the universal sound of Akshara. We can hear this real sound of the universe within us when the mind has completely disappeared. All over the world people have realized this AUM. Muslims, Christians, Jews and others call it 'Amen'. Zoroastrians call it 'Ahura Mazada'. A from 'Ahura' and 'M' from 'Mazada' is AUM. They have made it a deity. This sound is not produced by friction of two objects; it is the nature of the universal existence. It is therefore called uncreated (Anahat), the sound without the sound.

Patanjali says in his Yoga-sutras that repeating and meditating on AUM annihilates all the obstacles and awakens a new consciousness. Repeating should, however, be accompanied by meditation. Meditation means awareness. If we watch a sexual body, our awareness becomes sexual; if we watch something that is an object of greed, our awareness becomes greed. Whatsoever we watch, we become. The observer becomes the observed. So when we watch repetition of AUM, we become that universal sound. But then we are born into a new consciousness where object and subject dissolve and the knower and the known are no more.

Secondly, the repetition and meditation of AUM cures the diseases of the body. Because disease is a disturbance in the bioenergy or the flow of electricity in the body. Whenever electricity does not flow in some of the centres or parts of the body in its proper quantity, all kinds of diseases happen. The science of acupuncture

<sup>3.</sup> Ibid, Ch. VI, p. 146.

developed in China about five thousand years ago, therefore, works on the principle that without any medicine if one allows the electricity to flow in those centres, then also the diseases disappear. Patanjali says that merely repetition and meditation of AUM can do the same. If one sits in a quiet temple with a dome and chants AUM loudly with full awareness, one can actually feel that one's body-energy is getting settled with the sound resounding in the dome and falling back upon like rain.

Navrang would, however, say that the Mantra AUM despite all its above benefits still keeps one chained to the unmanifested reality of Akshara. It has no potentiality of enabling the Sadhak to realise the Highest Reality of Uttam Purusha. In the Veda the Mantra is spoken of very highly and eulogised as the supreme achievement of the Vedic seers. But Krishna would not agree with those seers, because they still know very little about the absolute reality of Uttam Pu usha. At their best, those seers could speak about the four zones (Padas) of Akshara, in the infinitesimal portion of the fourth of which countless universes rise and fall. Though, at times, indications like "Aksharat Paratah Parah" have no doubt been made in the Upanishads, nevertheless the seers hardly had any adequate knowledge of the Akshara-tita reality of the Supreme Purusha. Hence they had to be contented with nothing but the partial reality of Akshara with its sound symbol of AUM.

Navarang Swami, on the other hand, was initiated by his Guru Prannath to Tartamya Mantra which unfolded to him not only the complete reality of Akshara with all its four zones (Padas) but also the vast infinite abode of the Supreme Purusha, thus illumining him, the entire hierarchy of the fourteen Lokas of Kshara Purusha, the four zones of Akshara Purusha and the infinite reality of blissful consciousness of the Absolute.

When Krishna says that AUM worshippers also come to Him, what He means is that essentially there is no difference between Akshara and Aksharatita. Hence those who attain to Akshara's universal consciousness, eventually become a part of the Absolute and inseparate with the Supreme, from the eternal joy of whom proceeds the dream creation. Nonetheless, He does not recommend the worship of AUM to Arjuna; instead Arjuna is counselled to

abandon all the paths advocated by the Vedas and other such systems and finally come to Him with whole-hearted surrender. Why? Because by worshipping Akshara through AUM Sadhana he shall merge himself in the infinite consciousness of Akshara, i.e the Sat aspect of the Sat-Chit-Anand Absolute and thus would become inseparate with the creator of multiple universes; whereas by worshipping the Supreme he would wake up for ever from the dreaming consciousness of creation and would attain to the true essence of the Absolute, the Prajnanam-anandam Brahman. This is the secret most wisdom revealed to Arjuna.

Navrang Swami, therefore, suggests that this subtle point of mystery can be understood only by following the above path of exclusive devotion along with the practice of Tartamya Mantra. Then, and not till then, can we realize the transcendental reality of the Supreme. The entire creation of Kshara Purusha with all the fourteen planes and the abyss of darkness of Nirakar is a dream of cosmic mind of Akshara Purusha, and this cosmic dream has been created, in particular, for the relish of Absolute Purshottam as well as His centres of bliss-consciousness which are popularly known as the the souls Supreme or Brahman-sristis.

A momentous question has often plagued the human mind as to how this dream of sufferings and woes of life could be a divine creation of the Blissful Reality. It is an aspect of divinity from which the mind in men turns away and ostrich-like hides its head. This world of our labour and strife is so fierce, dangerous and destructive that life exists in it very miserably. By every step someone is crushed and his heart is broken. The world of pain and sufferings, replies Navrang Swami, is one of the bliss creating Lilas of the Supreme. He sports with His infinite centres of Bliss-consciousness, i.e. souls who, as the centres of energy of the Absolute, mirror each other in the creativity of eternal sport. And this sport of cosmic-creation gives rise to new forms of Bliss in the existence of the eternal creativity.

Absolute Brahman is essentially one; however, He manifests Himself as two: Purushottam and Akshara. Purushottam is the enrichment of union in the eternal sport of blissful love. Akshara is consciousness of separation and emptiness in divine love, which

causes the emergence of phenomenal many-ness and ignorance by a complete black-out of the absolute consciousness, resulting in the relative consciousness of the excitements of pleasure and pain. Hence the eternal existence of Akshara is the existence of eternal longing of the relative consciousness, seeking its fulfilment eventually in the Absolute consciousness.

This truth which may be grasped with difficulty by an intellectual apprehension, however, becomes meaningful when we see that the basic desire of every conscious creature is to experience miseries of life either by undergoing its pangs himself or precariously by imagining himself to be in the similar situations. Man's interest in reading tragedies of life, enacting the drama of violence, enjoying the witnessing of the scenes of horrors of war and crimes amply bear this out.

In his "Beyond the Pleasure Principle", Dr. Freud, the eminent psychologist, has raised a posing question as to why the human mind, when it is free to fancy all the pleasures of life in its dreams, nevertheless imagines itself to be surrounded by all kinds of strifes and struggles of life. Dr. Freud, therefore, further says that he would be grateful to any system of thought that could explain this enigmatic situation.

The answer to this riddle of life lies in Navrang's philosophy of the Lila of Purushottam. The cosmic dream has been created for the sole purpose of providing the experience of pain to the bliss-centres of the Absolute Energy. That is the reason why the mind tries to relish the subtle experiences of all kinds of sufferings in the world either by undergoing itself the tormenting situations of life or by precariously imagining itself to be amidst such situations through the world of fiction, movies or fanciful dreams of life.

The world is just a blackboard on which if something is written with a white chalk it could become visible. The black board is necessary for the white writing to become visible. Similarly the world is required for us to become aware of our inner consciousness. We have to fall ill to know our inner health.

Once a rich man became disturbed and began to feel fed up with his monotonous life. He heard of another country where he could gain happiness. He, therefore, disposed of all his property and, collecting all his wealth in a bag, he proceeded to that country

to seek happiness. Wherever he went he announced that he would part away with all his riches in exchange for happiness. He was taken to various places of entertainment but he could not find much happiness. Lastly, he came to a saint to whom also he said the same thing. It was a lonely place and the saint snatched the bag from his hands and ran away. The rich man, being a little fat, could not run after him for a long distance. Suddenly losing all his riches he felt himself to be the poorest man of the earth and began to lament. He went to other people and related to them his poverty. People laughed at him and he felt more miserable. However, some people consoled him and accompanied him in his search for the absconded saint. When they all came to the saint's place, the rich man found, to his utter dismay, his bag lying outside the hut of the saint with all the wealth inside, as it is.

He fell on the bag and started weeping in happiness. The saint, watching everything from inside the hut, came outside and asked the rich man, "Are you happy, man? Have you found your happiness?" The ignorant man said, "Yes Swamiji, I am as happy as anyone could be on the earth. I have never seen this much happiness in my life."

What is this now? To climb a peak and become victorious, a valley is needed. To feel happiness, unhappiness is needed. To know the Divine, the material world is needed. The rich man was the same, the bag was the same, and nothing new had happened, yet the man said that he felt so happy as he had never felt before. The contrast had happened. Thus the infinite consciousness becomes the limited conciousness and through the worldly process it regains itself. This is the true purpose of the creation.

Acharya Badarayan says: लोकवत्तु लीलाकैवल्यम् i. e. it is mere play that results to Brahman from creation, as indeed is the case in the world with kings, children and others. (Brahman Sutras: 2.1.33) Many western literary critics think that the painful experiences of life cause pleasure in poetry and drama because through literature they are freed from their personal limitations and become the common experiences of universal nature. But, truly speaking, as the Natya-Darpana also points out, all experiences in human lifepleasant and unpleasant—are mixed up in such wise that they

contribute to the enjoyment of life, just as spices of all tastes, sweet, bitter and sour, when properly mixed up, make a saucy drink. We find echoes of this idea in Lucas: "Life is fascinating to watch whatever it may be to experience. And so we go to tragedies not in the least to get rid of emotions but to have them more abundantly, to banquet not to purge." (Tragedy, p. 52) In Western Philosophy Schopenhauer has given the same explanation when he says that tragedy lays emphasis on the serious and miserable side of life and helps us to understand better the ultimate reality, — namely, 'the utter vanity of living.'

There is a divine will even in the atom, though in a mechanical form. Therefore the atom is said to be not possessing the free-will but is actually possessed by it. Similarly, in the animal life a sort of conscious memory and a certain kind of thought-process works, nonetheless the cat can no more be blamed for killing than the atom for its blind movement. For it is really not the cat, but Nature in the cat that kills. The mind in man is also an instrument of Nature, though the sense of free-will is a necessary machinery of action of Nature. The same amount of free-will works in man as it does in the cat. As Nature deludes man by all its phenomena, the idea of a free-will is the most powerful of these delusions. ego thinks that it is the real self and acts, as it were, the true centre of action and as if all existed for its sake. Though it is not wrong in thinking that there is someone within ourselves who is the true centre of its action and for whom all exists, yet this is not the ego, it is the mighty Lord, secret within our heart, Who accepts the representation of the cosmic play.

The central theme of the Gita is only that Purushottam is the absolute reality behind the changeable Nature and its unchanging substratum Akshara. One who sees this, sees truly. The human eyes may not be able to see this great truth. Therefore, Krishna says to Arjana, there is a divine eye, an inmost seeing, by which the whole creation as unified in God's body can be beheld, and that eye I now give to you. Thereupon he sees Lord's hundreds and thousands of divine forms. "I see", he cries, "all the gods in thy body and Brahma, the creating Lord, seated in the lotus. I see thy infinite forms on every side, thou art a luminous mass of energy on all sides of me, an encompassing blaze, a sun-bright

Immeasurable. But I see not thy end nor thy middle nor thy beginning."

This then is the secret wisdom: the whole world divided in multiplicity and yet unified in the Virat, the body of Ishvara. When this new vision has been acquired by a devotee, what will be his view of the world around? Krishna replies that he will have the experience all around of the mystery of the sufferings of the world-existence. Vibhutis described in the Gita are nothing but mere symbols of the Divine in things that are recognised and set high. Because in the greatness of this vision there is, too, the terrific image of the destroyer. Arjuna sees not only the gods and their heavens but also mouths that gape to devour. The kings and the captains of the world-battle are hastening into its terrible jaws. The nations are rushing to destruction with helpless speed into mouths of flames. People are seen with crushed and bleeding heads caught between the teeth of power.

It is also an aspect of divinity from which the mind in men turns away. The ignorance wants only fair and comforting truths of pleasurable aspect of life or in its absence pleasant fables of imagination. This world of our labour is fierce, unjust, violent and destructive. Life in it exists in pain. The cosmic vision is given to to Arjuna to let him realise the truth in its entirety. The torment of pain and evil on which we are racked is also His touch as much as happiness and sweetness. Anyone would like to ask otherwise: What is the significance of this miserable existence of tormented life, this world-wide struggle, this labour and anguish and perishing of creatures? Destruction, replies Krishna, is the will of My workings, all is done by Me. I as time have to destroy the old structures and to build up a new one. Whoever turns from it is showing not wisdom of unified vision of My omnipresence. With the eye of the ignorance we cannot know God in all His myriad forms.

The enlightened man's vision is therefore never deluded by the mask. It detects behind every evil the Godhead. It welcomes the flaming and tormenting tongues of the divinity. To him, all that is painful and imperfect in nature does not exist as an absolute opposite of the nature of the Godhead, but goes back to something behind itself as part of an eternal sport of the Lord. The illusion

that things exist in themselves or for themselves apart from God has passed from him. From these words of the Gita, there is revealed the hidden truth behind the ugly form of life as a reassuring, a heartening and delightful truth. There is something that can make the heart of the dedicated souls to rejoice and take pleasures in the nearness of the Divine. The truth thus becomes to a devotee a closeness, a constant companionship of man and God. It makes to him seizable the vast spiritual principle of joy in which man is living in the world for God, and God revelling in His sport to turn the devotee's life to His own divine ends through the enigmatic world-process.

This is a knowledge which embraces oneness with the Divine, a will emptied of egoism and acting only by the command as an instrument of the Supreme. This way is simple, to do all actions for the sake of the disporter, so that every outward going movement of the mind shall be associated with the inner spiritual truth of the Lord's Lila. Thus mind is called back from moment to moment to the disporting reality and connected with its source. Then the presence of the Purushottam grows upon him of its own, till he is filled with it all around him.

There is also a way to control the baser nature in the act, that is by renouncing the fruit of all action and giving up to the power that directs the work. In the lower ignorant consiousness of mind there are many Dharmas, many ethical and social laws of Manu to follow; because there are varied vital and mental demands. But the immortal and supreme Dharma is one. It is that of higher spiritual consciousness. It is beyond the three gunas, beyond all the qualities of nature, and to reach it all these lower Dharmas have to be abandoned. The devotee of the Supreme has to give up all desires and actions to the Master of his being and let the divine will flow through him undeflected by his own resolves, preferences and desires.

But again when Krishna says "I am in the desire which is not contrary to Dharma," the question arises as to what about the desires which are contrary to Dharma and are movements of passion. Krishna replies, "They are verily from Me, but I am not in them, it is they that are in Me." Here is indeed a strong and subtle distinction. The divine nature is not imprisoned in them;

they are only phenomena in His being. We imagine that the soul is in the body, but it is the body that is in the soul. In reality, the body is a very small thing in the infinity of the soul. In much the same sense, the evil in the world is in the Divine rather than the Divine in it. It is upon the basis of these statements of the Gita that Navrang views the gradation of things from lower to higher in a hierarchy of Tartamya Jnana.

Reality then becomes a harmonious phenomenon in which even the poison plays its own part. Not only happiness and health but also misery and physical suffering are seen in a new light. The ugly becomes an aspect of the Beautiful. He understands for the first time why opposite of good exists as evil. Opposites are no longer opposites; they become complementary, helping each other. Now there is no complaint of the devotee against existence. He understands why things are as they are. Then he says that life is perfect, one cannot improve upon it. It is an eternal drama of Akshara to meet the demands of the Lila of Aksharatita Purushottam.

## Chapter IV

# Monotheism and the Unity of Religions

Between the gods of the Purana or the Buddhist scriptures and those of the Grecian or the Egyptian mythology, all kinds of similarities are found. Hitherto it has been thought that they are simply a product of human imagination and correspond to nothing real in the universe. But the recent experiences of some of the western occultists, Theosophists, Rosicrucians, Lamas, Radhaswami Masters, Yogis like Aurobindo and the Mother evince that they have an independent reality older than even men existed. They are beings who belong to the progressive creation of the universe and have themselves presided over its formation. All those who set out on the discovery of these invisible world of gods and make a report of what they saw give a very similar account.

All these zones of realities have got different names and different classification, but behind all these changing names from country to country and language to language, there is an essential unity. Whether you call the mother energy of the world as Maheshvari or Pallas Athene is immaterial. Though these gods are not limited to human forms, they however accept any form man can build for them and infact they at times inspire into man's mind to build certain forms suiting to his temperament.

The infinity creates and is Brahma; it preserves and is Vishnu; it destroys and is Rudra. When the Shakta, the worshippers of the energy, classify these, they say that the energy formulating as the mother of the worlds is Durga or Maheshvari. In the mark of destruction it is Kali, the dark mother. Cosmic consciousness is Vishnu, the lord of spiritual bliss and love. As an incarnation he leads the earth-evolution; Laxmi is His aspect of supreme love and delight. Her gifts are the spirit's grace and charm. She is Sarasvati as the utilities of worldly knowledge. And in all her powers and forms she carries with her supreme sense of masteries of the eternal Ishvari of the Tantra-shastras.

But the basic Hindu concept of gods is that of one Supreme Creative Power who manifests Himself in multiple functions in the world of phenomena and receives diverses names appropriate to the particular function they perform. The Gita says that each function is presided by a deity by invoking which man gets the benefits of that particular god's field of activity. However, the benefits gained by these devotees of small gods are of perishable nature and in hankering after them those devotees miss the greater benefit, i. e. their final liberation from this world and entry into the eternal abode of the Supreme. This is how the Gita explains the philosophy of monotheism vis-a-vis the polytheistic attitude of worldly-minded men. The verses of the Gita put together make this point very clear.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तान् तथा एव भजामि अहम्।
मम वत्मं अनुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थं सर्वशः ॥
काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धि यजन्ते इह देवताः ।
क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिः भवति कर्मजा ॥

(गी० ४/११, १२)

Arjuna, howsoever men approach Me even so do I reward them; knowing this, men in all possible ways, follow My path. But those who desire the worldly attainments worship the gods and their desires are also met quickly.

Men who seek the lower or the higher ways of life through the employment of their spiritual strength can be divided into two categories. First, there are those who have their complete trust in Me and in My grace and therefore always desire to seek Me to gain an entry into the eternal abode of the Infinite Supreme. Second, there are those in whom the worldly desires gurgle up to flood their mental zones. Their discriminative faculties are so clouded by the strong urges for sense gratification that they long for their satisfaction in this world and seek to offer their devotion to the gods, by pleasing whom quick results can be obtained. For this they are unmindful of the low statuses of these deities and nature-spirits. But I reward both kinds of devotees according as they desire the results. Those who know this fact choose the better path of devotion to Me and transcend the wheel of birth and death.\*

(गी०र०:अ० १०)

हों जड़ चैतन्य प्रकृति की, साक्षी ईश्वर स्वरूप।
 ये मूढ़ मोकों जाने नहीं, हों अव्यय कारण रूप।।
 ये करें करम देवता निमित, ये जाएँ सरग है जाहि।
 पूर्ण भोग करके पड़ें, आवागमन के माहि।।

कामै: तैः तैः हतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्ते अन्यदेवताः। तं तं नियमं आस्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥ ये अपि अन्यदेवताभक्ताः यजन्ते श्रद्धया अन्विताः। ते अपि मां एव कौन्तेय यजन्ति अविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ (गी० ७/२०, ९/२३)

Those whose minds are distorted by desires resort to other gods and observe various rites, constrained by their own nature. Even those who endowed with faith worship other gods, worship Me no doubt, though not in accordance with rules.

All the persons are not desirous of Moksha, i. e. their union with the Supreme Reality. Their passionate nature seeks the fulfilment of their desires for worldly things. Hence prompted by their Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic nature, they are attracted towards the worship of like deities of Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic kind, by propitiating whom they can obtain fulfilment of their desires. Since ultimately all the gods are expressions of the Supreme, the benefits that accrue to the devotees of smaller gods are to be understood as ordained by the Supreme Lord Himself. Nevertheless, it is not in accordance with rules and is Avidhipurvak, with the result that the devotees of smaller gods are always deprived of the knowledge of the Supreme Truth.\*

<sup>\*</sup> स्वांतसी राजसी तामसी, त्रिविध करम तू लेख।
विष्णु लोक सत लोक लों, रुद्रलोक लों देख।।
अधिकारी तीनों लोक के, तीनों लोक जाये लेह।
सकाम भोग करके फिरें, आवागमन में तेह।।
त्रगुन देव को आद दे, जाय देवलोक कोय।
निश्चें करम करके फिरें, आवागमन में सोय।। (अ०३)
ये त्रगुन सरूप को आद दे, विभूति मेरी होय।
मोकों लखे न ये सबे, त्रगुन आद दे कोय।। (अ०१०)

अन्तवत् तु फलं तेषां तत् भवति अल्प-मेधसाम् । देवान् देवयजः यान्ति मद्भवताः यान्ति मां अपि ॥ अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुः एव च । न तु मां अभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेन अतः च्यवन्ति ते ॥ (गी० ७/२३, ९/२४)

The fruit gained by the people of small intelligence, however, is perishable. For the worshippers of gods go to the gods, but My devotees come to Me. In fact, I am the enjoyer of their offerings and Lord of all sacrifices. But these men do not know Me in reality and so they fall.

The Puranic concept of god is that of One Supreme creative power, ever active in the world of phenomena, receiving appropriate names because of His multiple functions. All gods are but functional names of One Universal Power manifesting in myriad forms. Each god is a productive potential, by invoking which man could get the benefits of that god's particular field of activity. When the Supreme is enacting the whole drama of creation, all fields of activity wherein men strive and seek the help of the higher beings are actually ordained by Him for His enjoyment; and all the fruits granted to the devotees of the gods with limited potentials are also decreed by Him. But this fact is not known to all the people, otherwise they would not have invoked limited potentials of Him for some finite profit and, jumping from one worship to another, would not have slipped down to fall into the endless game of desires and worldly entanglements.

(गी॰ र०: अ० ३)

जे जे देव को भजै जे, सकाम करम के जोग। ते ते देवलोक जायके, करैं करम को भोग।। जेहि जेहि कर्म जैसे करे, तेहि तेहि लोक पाये। तहां करम ते भोग कर, परे चौरासी जाये।। हूँ ईश्वर सबही देव को, मोकों लखे न जान। यातें सबे अन्य देव को, भजे कामना मान।।

यान्ति देवव्रताः देवान् पितृन् यान्ति पितृव्रताः । भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्याः यान्ति मद्याजिनः अपि माम् ॥ अनन्याः चिन्तयन्तः मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते । तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहामि अहम् ॥ (गी० ९/२४, २२)

The rule is: worshippers of the gods go to the gods, worshippers of the dead go to the ancestors, worshippers of the ghosts or spirits reach the nature-spirits, and those who worship Me come to Me. To those who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, to such ever united in thought with Me, I bring full security and personally attend to their needs.

Mere worship with devoted thoughts, however sincere, does not bring about the spiritual unfoldment of the devotee, because before following the path of spirituality, it is very necessary to find out, at first, as to whom to worship, and whether one should pursue all the elaborate rituals that the Vedas and other Puranic or Tantrik scriptures prescribe. For, notwithstanding the fact that all the deities are expression, of the one Supreme, the rule says that the votaries of the Devas go to their respective Deva-lokas, and those who offer libations to their ancestors and do the Pitra-Pujan go to the world of the ancestors, i. e. Pitra-loka. The basest kinds of men and women who worship the ghosts and the nature-spirits, trees, water, fire etc. fall to the level of brutal animalism and fetishism, proving themselves a disgrace to the dignity of man and eventually reaching the dark spheres of the ghosts and Preta-lokas. However, Krishna finally rips open the secret vaults of Nature and says that applying the same principle 'as you think so you become', the votaries of the Supreme then attain to the Supreme who personally attends to the needs of the devotees ever united in thought with Him. \*

देव भजे ते देवलोक, पित्र भजे पित्र पाय । देवी बिना एक जे भजे, सो भूत लोक को जाय ॥ (अ० १०) ते निज उत्तम पुरुष के, उत्तम भगत जे आय । परमहंस इनको कहे, एकादस में जाय ॥ (अ० १७)

रुद्र-आदित्याः वसवः ये च सांध्याः विश्वे अश्विनौ मरुतः च उष्मपाः च । गन्धर्व-यक्ष-असुर-सिद्ध-संघाः वीक्षन्तो त्वां विस्मिताः च एव सर्वे ॥ कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन् महाऽऽत्मन् गरीयसे ब्रह्मणः अपि आदिकर्वे ॥ अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास त्वं अक्षरं सत् असत् तत् परं यत् ॥ (गी० ११/२२, ३७)

Arjuna, perceiving the universal form of Supreme God, says: the Rudras, the Adityas, the Sadhyas, the Vishvadevas, the Aswinkumaras, the Marutas, the manes, and multitudes of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras, and Siddhas, all gaze at you utterly amazed. And why should they not pay homage to you who is the progenitor of Brahma, the original creator? O Infinite Being, Lord of the gods, Abode of the Universe, thou art the imperishable, the Being and the non-being and what is beyond that.

The entire cosmos including all the higher worlds of gods is housed in the Supreme, and all the Devas know about it. They also know it well that they are the limited potentialities of the Lord, and derive their individual might from Him. Hence all the gods whom ordinary people worship pay homage to Him who is the source of all, fully realising how impossible it is for them to reach the dimensions almost unknowable and beyond both the Being and the Non-Being and even what is beyond that. Thus, the hierarchy of the existence of the planes of Devas like Brahma, Rudra, etc. and the supremacy of the Absolute is established implying thereby that the Mokshadesirous Sadhak need not worship the deities who themselves are not liberated and look for such liberation by paying homage to Absolute Purushottam. \*

<sup>\*</sup> त्रगुन देव को आद दे, सुर असुर सब कोय।

ये देखे हैं विश्व रूप में, थावर जंगम सोय।।

कहे अर्जुन प्रभु परम धाम, हो तुम ब्रह्म सरूप।

दिव्य पुरुष करता जगत, हो आदि देव निजरूप।।

मुनि नारद रिषी देवगन, रुद्र रूप अरु व्यास।

ये तिहारो जाने नहीं, गुझ रूप प्रकास।। (अ०१३)

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः । अहं आदिः हि देवानां महर्षिणां च सर्वशः ॥ यः मां अजं अनादिं च वेत्ति लोक-महेश्वरम् । असंमूढः सः मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥ (गी० १०/२, ३)

Neither the gods nor the great sages know any origin of Me for I am the source of the gods and the great sages in every way. Therefore, among all men only those who realise that I am the great God of all spheres and that there is no birth or origin for Me, become free from sinful life and attain to knowledge.

The reality of the Supreme Being is the greatest riddle of the world. It is the biggest puzzle not only to us but even to the great sages as well as to the gods. And, as a matter of fact, He has to be so. Because how can the finite know the Infinite, how can a drop of ocean measure the depth of the profound ocean? The very nature of the illusive power of Maya is such that it is difficult at first even to understand Her mysterious workings, what to speak of the One who is the Mighty Lord of the infinitesimal existence of Maya. Krishna, however, has tried to give us an inkling to this greatest secret of all the secrets. Now it is up to the competence of the aspirant as to how far he is able to grasp it and then wake up from the cosmic dream to the reality of the Absolute. The day this momentous happening occurs it becomes the day of benediction for that enlightened soul who is freed for good from his sinful existence. \*

<sup>\*</sup> कहे भगवान पारथ प्रतें, त्रगुन आद सब कोय।
हों जानों रिषी मुनि देव को, मोकों न जाने सोय।। (अ० १३)
ये त्रिगुन सरूप को आद दे, विभूति मेरी होय।
मोकों लखे न ये सबे, त्रिगुन आद दे कोय।। (अ० १०)
ये भेद मेरो विश्व रूप को, तत्व दरसी सो आय।
उत्तम भगत ते लखत हैं, आद अन्त इनको पाय।। (अ० १३)

## COMMENTS

When Arjuna perceived the cosmic form of Krishna, he was bewildered to see that the Kshara and perishable Virat contained all the upper regions upto Brahmaloka. The planes of the gods among the usually worshipped ones as Vishnu, Rudra, Ganesh, Durga, Kali and the like are all there in the Virat. But the worshippers of these gods have to return to the world for rebirth. In the Brahma-sutras (4.4.22) and some of the Upanishads it is stated that those who go to Brahma-loka do not return from there, but this non-return of the souls from there is to be taken as only for that particular creation in view of the Gita's contradictory text, supported by some of the Puranas.

In the Puranas, in fact, one can trace out a host of texts that inform us of the hierarchy of the existence of the planes of Devas and the different fruits one can gain by worshipping them. In the Bhagavata-Purana (2.3.1-10) the king Parikshit makes an enquiry of the sage Shuka-deva as to which god the thoughtful men should worship. The sage replies that it would differ from person to person in accordance to the basic desires each may harbour. A man who aspires for sacred knowledge ought to worship Brihaspati, the preceptor of the gods, but one who longs for the strength of the senses should worship Indra. A tabulated list is given for the worship of different deities for the gratification of various desires:

for sacred knowledge god Brihaspati for strength of senses god Indra for prosperit goddess Maya (Laxmi) for energy god Fire for wealth gods Vasus for power gods Rudras for food goddess Aditi for heaven Sons of Aditi for sovereignty gods Vishvadevas for securing allegiance of subjects by a ruler gods Sadhyas

for long life		god Aswins
for stoutness of body		goddess Earth
for worldly prestige		goddess Earth and Dyauh
for personal charm		gods Gandharvas
for beautiful wife		goddess Urvasi
for lordship over others		god Brahma
for fame		god Vishnu
for treasures		god Varuna
for learning		god Shiva
for conjugal happiness		goddess Uma (Parvati)
for pious life		god Vishnu
for propagation of one's race		demi-gods Pitras
for protection against odds		demi-gods Yakshas
for bodily vigour		wind-gods Marutas
for kingdom		god of that Manvantar
for employing spells for male	volent	
purposes	•••	goddess of death, Nirrti
for sense-gratification	•••	moon-god Soma
for cessation of all desires		Lord of Nature, Narayana
FOR MOKSHA	•••	SUPREME PURUSHA

Thus for those who seek liberation the worship of Supreme Purusha with intense devotion is prescribed. Moreover, to the devotee of the Supreme other benefits accrue automatically by the Devas just as watering the root quenches the thirst of every branch of a tree or offering the food to the mouth satiates all the sense-organs of a man. This has a parallel in the holy writings of the other religions as well. For example, the Bible speaketh: "If you attain to God and His Kingdom of righteousness, all things else shall be added

अकामः सर्वकामो मोक्षकाम उदारघी । तीव्रेण भिवतयोगेन यजेत पुरुषं परम् ।। (भाग० २/३/१०)

<sup>2.</sup> यथा तरोर्मूल निषेचनेन तृष्यन्ति तत्स्कंघ भुजोप शाखाः । प्राणोपहाराच्च यथा इन्द्रियाणां तथैव सर्वार्हणं अच्युतेज्या ।। (भाग० ४/३१/१४)

unto you." So does the Quran: "If you find God, then you have found all things. Just think; the creator thou does find, can His creation still remain behind?"

A question arises: if the Devas are the manifesations of one Supreme, how is it that one scripture sometimes prescribes men to worship one particular deity, while the other scripture enjoins us to worship the other deity and then there are numerous other scriptures that completely prohibit the worship of the smaller deities? They instead advocate men of wisdom to offer their devotion to the one Absolute -a kind of monotheistic approach in contradistinction to the polytheism. The answer is quite obvious. There are different categories of souls and all of them are not bound for the same destination. The worldly souls are for eternal bondage and to delude them into worldly temptations Tamasic scriptures are written from time to time even by sages. Padma and Matsya Puranas have acknowledged only Vishnu, Nardiya, Bhagavata, Garuna, Padma and Varah Puranas as Sattvic. Lord Shiva himself confesses that instructed by god Vishnu he often came on earth in the form of Brahmins to write a series of scriptures in the Kaliyuga for deluding the people into ignorance. The doctrine of Mayavada and several anti-Vedic scriptures, namely Tamasic Tantra-shastras are his creation.11 Similar references are also found in scores of other religious writings.12

११. मायावादं असत् शास्त्रं प्रच्छन्नं बौद्धं उच्यते ।
मर्येव कथ्यते देवि कलौ ब्राह्मणरुपिणा ।
सर्वस्य जगतोप्यत्र मोहनार्थं कलौ युगे ।
वेदार्थवत् महाशास्त्रं मायावादं अवैदिकम् ॥

<sup>(</sup>पद्मपुराण, उत्तराखंड, अ० २३५/७, १०)

१२. माहेश्वर तंत्र, पटल १८; देवीभागवत, स्कंघ १२; ब्रह्मपुराण, प्रारम्भिक अष्टयायः इत्यादि ।

The Veda, however, would describe the gradations (Tartamya) of the Devas in a little different manner. The Taitiriya Upanishad (2/8) tabulates its list of graded schedule of the existences of gods in the following way:

- 1. A hundred-fold measure of human happiness = One happiness of men that have become angels in heaven.
- 2. A hundred-fold of the latter's measure = One happiness of gods that are already angels in heaven.
- 3. A hundred-fold of the latter's measure = One happiness of the fathers of heaven.
- 4. A hundred-fold of this = One happiness of gods in heaven.
- 5. A hundred-fold of this = One happiness of gods of work.
- 6. A hundred-fold of this = One happiness of great gods.
- 7. A hundred-fold of this = One happiness of Indra, the king in heaven.
- 8. A hundred-fold of his happiness = One happiness of Brihaspati, the teacher of gods.
- 9. A hundred-fold of his happiness = One happiness of Prajapati, the creator.
- 10. A hundred-fold of his happiness = The infinitesimal happiness of the Eternal Brahman, the reservoir of infinite Bliss.

Following the style of these scriptures Aurobindo has also tried to outline the gradations of the Divine Plan in his 'Hour of God' (Ch. II), a brief mention of which shall not be out of place.

### THE SUPREME ABSOLUTE

First Absolute—	TAT	The Absolute Transcendent, the
		Supreme, Paratpara.
Second Absolute—	SAT	The Supreme holding the four
		statuses as one, Ananda uniting
		Sat and Chit.
Third Absolute—	Aditi	The Adya-Shakti, the living
		dynamis, the Para-brahman of
		the Tantra.

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Ishvar of the Gita, Parmeshvari of the
Tantra.
Eternal— Satya-loka, Chaitanya-loka,
Tapo-loka, Anand-loka—
not those of the mental series.
The thrice seven planes of the Adya- Shakti as Vijnana-loka and the temporal
manifestations.

The Buddhist Lama Anagarika Govinda, the writer of "Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism" (Rider & Co.), speaks thus about the Gita's gradations of the cosmic plan, while explaining the famous Mantra of Avalokitesvara—OM MANI PADME HUM: "While uttering Om, we direct our mind upon the world of gods who are enmeshed in the illusion of their own permanence and perfection—while uttering MA upon those of Asura-world who driven by envy, are engaged in a perpetual struggle against the powers of light—while uttering DME we direct it upon the hungry spirits of the Preta-world".

Sir John Woodroffe who is noted for his profound studies of the Tantra-shastras finds that Kali and Vishnu are essentially the same, only the vehicles and their characteristic qualities differing. The Tantrik's predilection for the Divinity in its female form, as the mother of the universe, arises in part from the fact that the mother's heart being softer than that of the father. That is why, in Tantrik tradition for all the seven planes or cosmic centres each god presides in association with a female power whose names are given as follows:

Loka	Male Power	Female Power	
Bhuh (earth)	Brahma	Savitri	
Bhuvah	Vishnu	Laxmi	
Svah	Rudra	Bhadrakali	
Mahah	Ishvara	Bhuvaneshvari	
Janah	Sadashiva	Maha-Gauri	
Tapah	Shambu	Siddhakali	
Sat	Parmeshvara	Parmeshvari	

Sir John Woodroffe further writes: "It must not be supposed that the Sakam Tantrik worships Devatas as the Divinity. He no doubt pays homage to Devatas as higher beings; but the object of his worship is the Divine Mother, who is the same as Mahavishnu, the manifested God, and the methods of his worship are very much the same as those of the worshipper on Nivrtti path. What is stated in the Gita as the consequences of worshipping Devatas, Pitras, and Bhutas has no application to a Tantrik, the ladder of whose spirtual culture begins with the path of desire as the lowest round, and ends at that of which none knows—that is Kaivalya Mukti, or complete liberation".

The soul who has attained liberation sees that actually the zones of deities like Pitra, Gandharva, gods, Prajapati, Brahma etc. are nothing but merely the creation of mind. After death the mind creates them to fulfil its desires of enjoyment and such creation of the mind is something like a goldsmith's creation of new forms of jewelleries out of the same stuff of gold. <sup>2</sup>

To the interpreters of the Vedas, popularly known as the Mimansakas, when these questions are raised: What are the forms of the gods like Indra, Varuna, Agni etc. that appear in the Vedas, they say that these gods live in their words. Indra lives in the sound Indra; Varuna lives in the sound 'Va-ru-na.' All the gods are formed out of the syllables as each one of them is too great a power to be contained in any form. Similarly AUM is the symbol of Akshara Brahman. It is necessary to invent such symbols, for these vast concepts cannot be enclosed in any image. Nevertheless man's desire is compulsive; he persists in attempting to give body to his ideas.

(यजुर्वेद, वृहदारध्यक ४. ४. ४)

Principles of Tantrik, Pt. II, Introduction.

तद् यथा पेशस्कारी पेशसो मात्रामपादायान्यन्नवतरं कल्याणतरं रूपं तनुत एवमेवायमात्मेदं शरीरं निहित्याविद्या गमयित्वान्यन्नवतरं कल्याणतरं रूपं कुरुते पित्र्यं वा गान्धर्वं वा दैवं वा प्राजापत्यं वा ब्राह्यं वान्येषां वा भूतानाम्।।

Therefore, the Vedas say further that men should bear in mind that howsoever great and holy work they perform all that perishes in the end without knowing the Reality. One should first try to know one's self and worship it as one's true world instead of worshipping gods, for out of that very self he has created this whole universe of his desire. Insofar as a man makes offerings and sacrifices, he becomes the world of gods. Insofar as he gains knowledge, he becomes the world to the seers. Insofar as he offers libations to the fathers and desires offspring, be becomes the world of the fathers. Insofar as he gives lodging and food to men he becomes the world of men.9

Hence, the first task, says Navrang Swami, which focussed the attention of his Guru Mahamati Prannath was to determine the gradation of all the Devas and show the relevance of the writings of manifold scriptures for each category of souls. Knowledge of this was illumined to him by Tartamya Mantra received from his Guru, Nijanand Acharya who got this Mantra from the Supreme Himself. The essence of the Mantra is that "our kinship is with Krishna, the supreme who is the eternal Absolute Reality."

Mantra is basically a power which operating on any source or centre, can work it up that it may be available as operative energy to the requisite degree and in the required line and sense, for the full production of a desired fruit. Tartamya Mantra is the sound-vehicle to enter into contact and attain union with the supreme abode or the consciousness ensouled in that sound-form. It has also the potency of illumining the hierarchy of the existences of all the gods.

९. अप्यनेवं विन्महत् पुण्यं कर्म करोति तद्घास्य अन्ततः क्षीयत एवात्मानमेव लोकमुपासित स य आत्मानं एव लोकं उपास्ते न हास्य कर्मक्षीयते । अस्मात् ध्येवात्मानो यत् यत् कामयते तत् तत् सृजते ॥ अथो अयं वा आत्मा सर्वेषां भूतानां लोकः स यज्जुहोति यद्यजते तेन देवानां लोकोऽथ यदनुत्रृते तेन ऋणीणामथ यत् पितृम्यो निपृणाति यत् प्रजां इन्छिते तेन पितृणामथ यन्मनुष्यान्वासयते यदेश्योऽशनं ददाति तेन मनुष्याणाम् ॥ (यजुर्वेद, बृहदारण्यक, १/४/१५-१६)

In the Mantra each word is the sound-equivalent of experience connected with an internal or external stimulus. The Tartamya Mantra is a focus of energies in which the transformation of reality into the vibrations of the human voice—the vital expression of the human soul—takes place. Through these vocal creations a man discovers a new dimension, a world within himself, opening upon a vista of higher form of Reality, which is as much beyond the other humans, as the consciousness of a civilized man is above that of an animal.

But the power of Tartamya Mantra is not to be interpreted in physical terms, such as sound-waves or vibrations of atoms. If Tartamya Mantra could act in such a mechanical way, then it should have the same effect when reproduced by a gramophone record. But its repetition even by a human medium would not have any effect, if done by an ignorant person. The power and the effect of Tartamya depend on the spiritual attitude, the knowledge and the responsiveness of the individual. The Mantra has, therefore, power and meaning only for the initiated.

Everyone makes for himself an idea of the Divine according to his personal taste and his possibilities of understanding. Then if one wishes to come out of oneself a little and tries to acquire Tartamya's integral knowledge then he understands that the Divine is not only what he thought or felt it to be but it is also what others think and feel it to be and yet something more, something which none can think or feel. The moment this is realised, he has put his first step on the way to integrality. Integrality is an extremely difficult task for a human consciousness which begins to become conscious only by limiting.

However, Navrang Swami remarks, with a little effort and a practice of the Mantra of integral knowledge it is possible to widen oneself sufficiently so as to approach something integral in which the experiences of not only the Hindu saints but also the saints of other religions can find a ready welcome.

In fact the essence of religion is not morality but mysticism. And the way of the saints and prophets is the way of varied mystical experiences. All religions, therefore, spring from the mystical reve-

lation of the saints and prophets. The religious experience has the character of infinity and when an attempt is made to bring that experience in human words, the description becomes symbolic. It is in the sphere of these symbols conceived in different times and countries that what one religion says seems to contradict what another says. For they use different symbols for the same reality. Secondly around these symbols some rituals also develop automatically in course of time, to which the followers attach themselves very sentimentally. However, in spite of the different symbolic languages of each religion, an underlying fundamental unity is also noticed. We can take a few statements of the Holy Books and can ourselves verify it:

"I am the enjoyer of their offerings and lord of all sacrifices. But these men do not know Me in reality and so they fall. The rule is: worshippers of the gods go to the gods, worshippers of the dead go to the place of ancestors, worshippers of the ghosts or spirits go to the nature-spirits, and those who worship Me come to Me." (Gita, 9/24-25)

"From Allah do we come, for Him we are and to Him verily is our return.....join not other gods with Me; it is sin. For unto Me shall ye return at last." (Quran, 31.12)

"By force of knowledge and expanding thought shall we return to thee, unto that state which was at the beginning of our life." (Zoroaster, Gatha, 28.11)

"I am a jealous God, I brook no second." (Bible).

"At that day, ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." (Bible, John, 14.20)

"By this knowledge, you will realise Arjuna that all beings are in you and also in Me." (Gita, 4.35)

"He that loveth me, shall be loved of my father and will love Him." (Bible, John 14.21)

"I am exceedingly dear to the wise and he is supremely dear to Me." (Gita, 7.17)

Dr. Laurincer has shown over 100 such similarities between the Gita and the Bible in his "Indian Antiquity" (Vol. II); and

so has Dr. Sundar Lal in his "The Gita and the Koran." Mr. Arthur Lily has written "Buddhism in Christendom" to show nearly 50 similarities between the Buddhist and the Christian religions; and still many more could be worked out. For these religions have sprung from the mystical revelation of the same Reality.

But strong feelings are focussed on the symbolic descriptions of such experiences, on the mention of the books those experiences are related, on the mention of the holy places they are associated. There is a charge of emotion in the very names of the Gita, the Quran or the Bible; Kashi, Mecca or Jerusalem, etc. The Bible, as such, rightly advises its adherents, "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the father...God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth." (John IV, 21,24)

Navrang Swami, therefore, says that the more you know about the varied experiences of the mystics born in different periods of time and different parts of the world, the greater you understand His revelation in humanity. Then, and not until then, does one understand that all the religions are strung like pearls upon a thread of the Supreme's Divine Unity.\*

<sup>\*</sup> जंजीरा मुसाफ की, मोतियों में पिरोइये जब । जिन्सें जिन्स मिलाइये, पाइये मगज माइने तब ॥ (प्राणनाथ, किरन्तन ७२/१)

# Chapter V

### Paths Of Sadhana

Since the time immemorial there have always been existing two prominent schools of Sadhana in India, often referred to as the leftist and the rightist shades of thoughts. The leftist school of Sadhana included all sorts of Vam-margi practices of Shaiva, Shakta and Tantra systems. The Tamasic cults among these were notorious for their worship of sex organs, free indulgence in sex and intoxication, sacrifices of animals and at times even of human beings. The names of Kapalik, Kalamukha, corpse-eaters Aghori, Kaul-Kulai etc. are still fresh in the minds of the eastern part of the country. Then there was the rightist school of Sadhana which commanded a good following among the intellectual, princely and elite class of the ancient Hindu society. The rightist school mostly represented the multifarious shades of the Vedic and Puranic deity-worship with all its parapharnelia of rituals and sacrifices (Yajnas).

Later, came the period of Krishna who saw both the undercurrents of religious thinking in the country. The divinity within Him made Him perceive the futility of both the schools. He, therefore, set Himself before the task of rebelling against them right from His childhood. His 'govardhan--lila' was His first protest against the Vedic theory of Indra-worship. He might have had stood against the prevailing religious mood on many more occasions, but the complete record of it is not with us. We know of His views through the dialogues with Arjuna in the Gita.

In the Mahabharata, once the Brahmin sage Uttanka refused to accept water from the Chandala. Thereupon, Krishna remonstrated the sage for his such refusal. Therefore Krishna's assertion in the Gita that he has created the fourfold social order on the basis of one's attitudes and actions must be taken literally, without twisting it in any way and linking it to any profession or birth—"Guna Karma Vibhagasah" (4/13). In the days of Krishna, it was said that there was no salvation except through the Vedic path. But

a very few had the fitness to study the Vedas and a big chunk of society, viz. women, persons of lower caste, non-Hindus etc. were not permitted to study them at all. Krishna studied the situation and preached the doctrine, hitherto even unknown to the sages of the Vedas but now easily available to women, children, people of all castes, creeds & lands, the householder and the monk, the conquerer and the vanquished, indeed to everyone. What a direct and easy way to salvation, on which even if one runs with closed eyes, there is no danger of stumbling or falling. Whatever one does as one's professional activity for his livelihood is made a sacrifice, Yajna. Where is the need for any other sacrifices, Krishna asks? The Vedic way has always been cumbersome, difficult to traverse, sharper like a razor's edge (क्ष्रस्य घारा निश्चिता दूरत्यया) and more perilous than the edge of a sword. The secrets of God-realization that were supposed to lay locked up in the Vedas, Krishna places them at cross-road and like an engineer makes the gradient so gentle that we reach the top almost unaware that we are climbing. This is the merit of the royal road. In whatever profession the person is engaged, maybe even that of a butcher or a prostitute, through that natural action of one's life he or she is able to reach the Supreme-such is the secret most method, the Guhyatam Raj Vidya of the Gita.

But before disclosing it, Krishna adopts a comparative method. He mentions the multifold paths handed down to us from the ancient sages, and evaluates the limitations of each of them so that the aspirant could choose the one which is the best and the easiest for him and the most suited to his temperament.

# (i) Path of Rituals

सह-यज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरा उवाच प्रजापितः।
अनेन प्रसिवष्यध्वं एषः वः अस्तु इष्टकामधुक्।।
देवान् भावयत् अनेन ते देवाः भावयन्तु वः।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परं अवाष्स्यथः।।
(३/१०-११)

In the beginning Brahma created mankind along with Yajna (sacrifice) and said, "By Yajna shall you prosper, let this yield the milk of your desire. With this do you nourish the gods and may those gods nourish you; thus nourishing one another you shall attain the highest good."

Brahmaji, the Cosmic deity, puts up the cosmic show in the beginning and alongwith it the spirit of service in all the things. That is how, Nature's phenomena, the shining of the sun, the throbbing of the sea, the procreations of the earth, all function instinctively in the service of all. Man was given the method of Yajna (the sacrificing spirit of service) with which he could please the gods and seek the fulfilment of his desires, just as the sage Vasishta could milk out all his desires from the celestial cow Kamdhenu. But this way of life was a kind of Sakam Upasana, a way of selfish devotion of the gods who blessed their devotees with the objects of enjoyment in the world as well as in the higher worlds of their heavens. The net result of such type of selfish devotion is, however, that the devotees of gods have to come again to the eternal wheel of birth and death after the exhaustion of the fruit of their merits.\*

पाप पुन्य बस जाय जहां, वहां करें भोग ते विविध ।
 कर भोग ते परे, सकाम की ये सिध ।।
 पार्थ सकाम करम की, येह निश्चें तू देख ।
 सकाम जेते देवता, ताको यही विध लेख ।।

ब्रह्म अर्पणं ब्रह्म हिवः ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् । ब्रह्म एव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्म-कर्म-समाधिना ॥ दैवं एव अपरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते । ब्रह्माग्नौ अपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेन एव उपजुह्मति ॥ (४/२४—२५)

Some perform sacrifices thinking that all Yajnas arise from Brahman, in which the performer is Brahman, the sacred fire is Brahman and the offering is also Brahman. Brahman verily shall be reached by him who sees Brahman in all actions. Thus, there are those who offer sacrifices to gods, and those who offer sacrifices as sacrifice by the self in the fire of the Supreme.

The sacrifices in which the oblations of material things like ghee etc. are offered to the deities are Sakam Yajna, the greatest fruit of which could be the attainment of Sat-loka. After the expiry of the earned merits the soul comes back again to this transmigratory world. Therefore, the discriminating Tattvadarshi does not attach much significance to all these forms of sacrifices. For him, knowledge of the Supreme Purusha is the greatest Yajna of life, in which the performer of the Yajna, the materials offered and the fire of Yajna are all Brahman and nothing else. Having performed this Yajna of knowledge, he sees his self truly and cuts asunder his ties with the world of dream for ever. Then, to that awakened all types of firesacrifices become a part of dream. It is meaningless for him whether he performs them or not. \*

(अ० ७)

<sup>\*</sup> तत्वदरसी को जग्य जो, ब्रह्मसूत्र जग्य आघार।

मतो तत्वदरसीय को, सबहीं ज्ञान तें सार ॥

तत्वदरसी जाने सबे, जग्य ज्ञान सब रूप।

निवृत करे मूल जगत ते, लखे निज सरूप॥

दिव्य जग्य अनुपान होम, दान व्रत दे आद।

सिधि याकी सतलोक लों, देवलोक भोग के स्वाद॥

त्रैविद्याः मां सोमपाः पूतपापाः यज्ञैः इष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते । ते पुण्यं आसाद्य सुरेन्द्र-लोकं अश्नन्ति दिव्यान् दिवि देवभोगान् ॥ ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यं लोकं विशन्ति । एवं त्रयीधर्मं अनुप्रपन्नाः गतागतं कामकामाः लभन्ते ॥ (९/२०-२१)

Those worshipping Me with sacrifices pray for the way to heaven as laid down in the three Vedas, and drink the Soma-juice and are cleansed of sin, reach the heavenly world of Indra and enjoy in heaven the pleasures of the gods. When their merit is exhausted, they return to this material world after having enjoyed the vast world of heaven, thus conforming to the doctrine of the three Vedas that desiring the objects of desires one obtains the state of going and coming.

Apparently there seems to be nothing wrong in worshipping the deities and obtaining the pleasures of their heavens. The snag is that many may take it to be a path of true knowledge and spirituality leading them to salvation. This could be a fatal mistake on the part of those who have not much time to do a lot of digging in the jungle of scriptural writings. Hence the repeated warning of Krishna not to bother much over whatever is written in the three Vedas and even in other similar scriptures of tribal mentality eulogising one god or the other and advocating fasts, almsgiving, pilgrimages, oblations, celibacy and what not. For their recommendations are as good as the books of the competitive examinations that promise careers of high status, power and wealth. But for the one who aspires for the true knowledge of the Reality and permanent escape from the unreality there is nothing in them.\*

<sup>\*</sup> दान व्रत तीरथ त्रपन, जनम करम करे जेह । भोग करे स्वर्ग लोक लों, अन्त परे जो तेह ॥ ब्रह्मचर्य जज्ञ आद दे, सकाम करे जो कोय। भोग करे सतलोक लों, अन्त परे जो सोय ॥

यां इमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्ति अविपिश्चतः । वेदवाद-रताः पार्थं न अन्यत् अस्ति इति वादिनः ॥ कामात्मानः स्वर्गपराः जन्मकर्मफल-प्रदाम् । कियाविशेष - बहुलां भोगैश्व्यं - गतिं प्रति ॥ (२/४२-४३)

Arjuna, the undiscerning who rejoice in the letter of the Vedas, who contend that there is nothing else, who are full of desires having heaven as their goal, proclaim these flowery words that promise rebirth as the fruit of actions and that prescribe various specialised rites for the attainment of enjoyment and power.

Krishna here gives a vivid picture of the atmosphere prevailing in His time. The pundits who must have had their hey-days of their learning of the Vedas were displaying their erudition of letters of the Vedas. They involved the people, by and large, in the ritualistic worship of the Vedic deities and in the performance of the Yajna-sacrifices which were undertaken and labouriously pursued as the necessary part of every man's life, be he a king or ordinary householder. Krishna is against them, exposing their hollow bloated egos and vanity and the advocacy of an impotent religion in which man's inner personality has no time or chance to progress towards understanding the truth. On the contrary, the more rituals a man performs, the greater is the growth of false confidence in him of his spiritual attainments and the consequent condensation of his ego. \*

<sup>\*</sup> फिलित बानी मो वेद की, तेह पढ़ित जो कीय।

रते वेद के बाद में, महा अभिमानी होय।।

करे करम सकाम ज्यों, ताको विघन अनस्त।

करे करम किया बहुल, स्वर्ग भोगन अन्त।। (अ

भौगेश्वर्य-प्रसक्तानां तया अपहृत-चेतसाम् । व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ।। यावान् अर्थः उदपाने सर्वतः संप्लुते उदके । तावान् सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्माणस्य विजानतः ।। (२/४४,४६)

Those whose minds are carried away by such words, and who are deeply attached to pleasure and power are neither determinate and resolute nor are they fit for steady meditation and Samadhi. To the one who has known Brahman and is enlightened, all the Vedas and rituals lose their significance and are of the same little use as is a pond in a place where there is flood everywhere.

The whip is lashed on the bare backs of the non-intelligent people who are after the learned scholars of the Vedas in a stunned admiration nurtured by their blind belief in them. When one gains the Infinite Bliss of the Supreme Brahman, everyone must admit that all the pleasures and post-mortem heavenly enjoyments promised in the higher worlds of the gods are comprehended in it. Where is, then, the need for the limited satisfaction and finite pleasures of senses for a man to whom the Infinite Bliss-consciousness overwhelms all round without dimensions and frontiers? Hence, Arjuna, flee from these and become completely free from all desires, or else you shall be trapped in the muddy morass of rituals and the resultant wheel of the transmigratory circle of creation.\*

<sup>\*</sup> काम आतमा सरग के, ऐश्वर्य भोग इच्छाय। जनम जनम फल करम कर, भ्रम बुद्धि जो ताहि॥ सकाम करम अरु वेदान्त, ताकी सिधि ये आय। याथें पारथ छोड़ तू, निहकामी हो जाय॥

## COMMENTS

The whole Vedic concept of gods is that of one Supreme Creative Power, ever active in the world of phenomena, receiving appropriate names because of its multiple functions. All Vedic gods are but functional names of the one Universal Power manifesting in myriad forms. Each god is also considered to be a productive potential, by invoking which man could get the benefits of that god's particular field of activity.

In the beginning the universal Power as creator or Prajapati puts up the show of the universe of gods and brings forth the living organisms, along with man. He creates also Yajna, the spirit-of-sacrifice on this stage of life for men to work, to strive, and to achieve the fulfilment of their carnal desires. The gods nourished by the sacrifices of mankind give them the desired objects. In this way, man would foster the gods and the gods would foster man; thus fostering each other man shall attain the supreme good. This is the law of human life.

In every Yajna there are four essential factors: (i) the deity invoked to whom the oblations are offered, (ii) the fire in which the offerings are poured, (iii) the material things that constitute the offerings, and (iv) the individual who is performing the Yajna. When materials are offered into a sacred fire, the oblations are consumed by the fire and the blessing of the presiding deity accrues to the invoker. But there are others who perform the Yajna of self-control. They offer hearing and the other senses into the fires of restraint so that the senses of their own accord get burnt up, contributing a greater freedom and joy in the inner life of the ascetic. Others offer sound and other objects in the fires of the senses to make the mind non-receptive to the perceptions of outer world and then to get a better poise in life for meditation. This is known as Indriyayajna.

Then there is Prana-yajna in which yogis sacrifice all the functions of the senses as well as of the breath in the fire of Yoga practice, kindled by knowledge. Many perform Dravya-Yajna, Tapo-yajna, Swadhyaya-yajna, and Jnana-yajna, in which they offer

wealth to the poor or indulge in severe austerity, study of scriptures or wisdom of philosophical reflection.

On evaluating the fruits of all these Yajnas, the Gita finds that Jnana-Yajna i.e. knowledge-sacrifice is greater than any material sacrifice, for all actions culminate in knowledge. Karma never ends karma, and as such action cannot be a complete fulfilment in itself. Ignorance causes desires and desires are the seeds from which all actions arise. When the ignorance itself is dispelled at the dawn of knowledge, action attains its consummation in knowledge (4/33).

But, the Puranas would however remark in their own typical style that if the worshipper of a particular deity is able to please the deity, the deity, in course of time, blesses the worshipper with a better knowledge and allows the worshipper to offer devotion to gods higher than him. At first a person does not think of even initiation to any type of deity-worship for many a birth. Then slowly he develops a desire within him for the worship of some deities. For seven births he thus continues worshipping deities and then in a new birth he obtains the initiation into the Mantra of Sungod who is the witness of all the deeds of the soul. For three births he has to keep on worshipping the Sun-god before he could be eligible to receiving the Mantra of god Ganesh, the destroyer of of all the obstacles. When the devotee continues his worship of Ganesh for another three lives, god Ganesh dispels his ignorance partially and he is thereby led towards the worship of goddess Mahamaya, i. e. Durga. For hundred lives one has to be a devotee of Durga before one could be considered competent enough to be the devotee of Lord Mahadeva. Mahadeva is indeed the eternal lord of knowledge of Krishna and therefore upon his grace only Mahadeva's devotees acquires, after three births, the company of Krishna-devotees in the beginning and then the Mantra of Krishna eventually. 10

१०. अनेक जन्म पर्यन्त दीक्षाहीनो भवेत् नरः ।
तदान्य देवमंशंच लभते पुण्यलेशतः ॥
सप्तजन्मोपदेवानां कृत्वा सेवां स्वकर्मतः ।
लभते च स्वेर्मन्त्रं साक्षिणः सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥
जन्म त्रयं भास्करंच निसेव्य मानवः शुचिः।
लभेत गणेश मंशंच सर्वविध्नहरं परम् ॥

It has been pointed out very aptly that on seeing the great Brahman assuming myriad forms of deities the sages have used the words as Narayana, Shiva, Vishnu, etc. for Brahman and vice versa. At times even smaller worldly things have also been designated as Brahman, for example, the sun is Brahman, mind is to be worshipped as Brahman, food is Brahman and so on. "But this is said on account of exaltation. In reality, they ought not to be worshipped as Atman or Brahman."

The Padma-Purana is very explicit on this point that the Greater Divinity is established in Vasudeva only and the sages of the Vedas have used the terms 'Atma' and 'Ishvara' for that eternal principle. The sages have also used the term 'Ishvara' wherever His divinity is found expressed and reflected in other agencies. 15

The Puranas have extolled the worship of Krishna and have considered Him to be the Supreme Purusha. In the Padma-Purana Shiva explains to Parvati that Lord Krishna is the Supreme Deity and is spoken of in the scripture as having two arms. He is not

(ब्रह्मवैवर्त पुराण, प्रकृति खंड, अध्याय ३६/९७-१०८)

(पदम्पुराण, षष्ठम, उत्तरखंड, अ॰ २२)

जन्म त्रयं तं निसेव्य निर्विध्न स्था भवेत् नरः । अज्ञानान्ध तमिरुळत्वा महामायां भजेन् नरः ॥ विष्णुमायांच प्रकृति दुर्गां दुर्गति नाशिनीम् । नानारुषां तां निषेव्य जन्मना शतकं नरः ॥ कृष्णज्ञानाधि देवं च महादेवं सनातम् । जन्मत्रयं तमाराध्य चाशुतोष प्रसादतः ॥ तदा तद् भक्त संसर्गति कृष्णा मंत्रं लभेद् ध्रुवम् ॥

१३. नारायणः शिवोविष्णुः शंकरः परमेश्वरः । एतैस्तु नामभिः ब्रह्म परं प्रोक्तं सनातनम् ॥ (वाराह पुराण, रुद्र गीता)

१४. ब्रह्मदृष्टिरुत्कर्षात् । न प्रतीके न हि सः । (ब्रह्मसूत्र ४. १. ४-५)

१५० निरुपाधीश्वरत्वं हि वासुदेवे प्रतिष्ठितम् । आत्मेश्वर इति प्रोक्तो वेदवादैः सनातनः ॥ तस्यांशभूतं ऐश्वयं यस्मिन् कस्मिश्च वर्तते । तस्मिन् ईश्वर शब्दोपि प्रोच्यते मुनिभिस्तथा ॥

the same deity who is spoken of as having four arms. <sup>16</sup> His real form is bliss and supreme consciousness, and He is beyond and formless unmanifested reality of Akshara. The souls, like rays, emanate from His infinitesimal part, and all the goddesses like Durga etc. as well as millions of Vishnus are born out of a minutest part of His Kala, i.e. Radha. <sup>17</sup> Those who worship deities other than Vasudeva, are indeed digging well standing at the bank of the Ganga. <sup>18</sup> Therefore, seek initiation of Krishna Mantra, because His Mantra destroys the seed of all karma and is the essence of all the Mantras. Its practice illumines the knowledge of the Supreme. <sup>19</sup>

That is the reason why all other gods worship Krishna as the Supreme Absolute. The Devi-Bhagavata-Purana says that Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva, all these three deities, are engaged in the worship of some eternal Principle.<sup>20</sup> Because their own forms are only made of the twenty-five constituents of Nature and hence are subject to temporal process of destruction.<sup>21</sup> As a matter of fact, these gods are deluded by Maya and their egos are bloated by thoughts like 'I am Vishnu', 'I am Brahma', 'I am Shiva' without

१६. भुजद्वयवृतः कृष्णो न कदाचित् चतुर्भुजः ।। (पद्म पुराण, पाताल खंड ७७/४९)

१७. परम आमोद चिद्रुपै: निर्गुणस्यैक कारणै: ।
तदंश कोटि-कोटि अंशा जीवन्ति किरणात्मकाः ।।
तत्कला कोटि-कोटि अंशा दुर्गा आद्याः त्रिगुणात्मिकाः ।
तस्या आंध्रि रजः स्पर्शात् कोटि विष्णुः प्रजायते ।।
(पद्म पुराण पां० खंड ६९/११५,११८)

९८. वासुदेवं परित्यज्य येऽन्यं देवं उपासते । तृषिता जाह्नवी तीरे कूपं वाच्छन्ति दुर्भगाः ।। (स्कंघ पुराण, वैष्णव खंड अ०१५)

१९. गृहाणमंत्रं कृष्णोति कर्ममूल निकृत्तनम् । सर्वेषामेव मंत्राणां सारात्सारं परात्परम् ।। (ब्रह्मवैवर्त्त पु० कृष्णजन्म खंड १३०/८/१०)

२०. विष्णुश्चरत्यसावुग्रं तपो वर्षाण्यनेकशः। ब्रह्मा हरस्त्रायोदेवा ध्यायन्तः कमपि ध्रुवम् ॥ (देवी भागवत पु०१/८/४५)

२१. पचिविशत्समुद्भुता देहास्तेषां न चान्यथा । काले मरणधर्मास्ते सन्देहः कोऽत्रते नृप ॥(देवी भागवत पु०४/१३/१८)

truly knowing who the eternal supreme Purusha of the Absolute being, consciousness and bliss is.<sup>22</sup>

The Padma-Purana also mentions about the transitory character of the planes of these three gods, whom most of the people worship in total oblivion of the fact that even after reaching Brahma-loka, the souls have to come down to Vishnu-loka, and then to Shiva-loka and from there to Swarga-loka and then back to the transmigratory wheel of the world, with the gradual expiry of their meritorious deeds. <sup>25</sup>

Graced by goddess Durga the devotee is initiated to Krishna Mantra, otherwise the souls are deluded in the fruitless search of mundane pleasures of the phenomenal world without ever coming to the Supreme. Such souls tempted by the illusive pleasures are always engaged in the worship of other gods and the practice of their Mantras. 24

In the Devi-Bhagavata-Purana Dharmaraj explains to Savitri that no doubt the deluded souls, trapped into the snares of the worldly

- २२. अहं विष्णुः अहं ब्रह्मा शिवोऽहं इति मोहिताः ।
  न जानीमो वयं घातः परं वस्तु सनातनम् ॥
  वयं माया वृताः कामं न स्मरामो जगद्गुरुम् ।
  परमं पुरुषं शान्तं सिच्चिदानन्द अव्ययम् ॥
  (देवी भागवत पु० ४/१९/२-३)
- २३. ब्रह्मलोके वसेन्तावद्यावत् कल्पक्षयो भवेत्।
  ब्रह्म लोकात् व्युतक्ष्वापि विष्णुलोकं स गच्छिति।
  विष्णुलोकात् परिभाष्टो रुद्रलोकं स गच्छिति।
  तस्मादिप च्युतः स्थानाद् द्वेपेषु स हि जायते।
  स्वर्गेषु च तथान्येषु भोगान् भुक्त्वा यथेप्सितान्।।
  (पदम पुराण, सृष्टि खंड १५/२८८, २२९)
- २४. नश्वरेऽनित्य संसारे भ्रमेण बर्बराः सदा। कुर्वन्ति नित्यबुद्धिश्च विहाय परमेश्वरम्। देवं अन्यं निषेवन्ते तन्मन्त्रंच जपन्ति चा। मिथ्या किंचिन् निमित्तंच कृत्वा मनसि लोभतः॥ (ब्रह्मवैवर्तं पु० प्रकृति खंड ६२/२१-२२)

pursuits, finally merge in Akshara Brahman only. But one difference still persists. The devotees of Krishna attains to His eternal abode from where there is no point of return, whereas the non-devotees of Krishna have again to come back to creation after the expiry of the period of dissolution of Nature. So also the Agni-Purana reiterates that, after the dissolution of the manifest and unmanifest Nature, the all-abiding pure consciousness that shines forth is that of Akshara who is a partial manifestation of the Supreme Parmatman.<sup>25</sup>

From these extracts of the numerous scriptures it is obvious that a distinction has always been made by the ancient sages between the worship of the Supreme Absolute and the worship of the deities that are His partial manifestations in Nature. The souls who are worldly-minded have, no doubt, been advised to worship the gods and to invoke their blessings for achieving the gratification of carnal desires. But the divine souls whose ultimate goal is deliverance from the bonds of Nature have been guarded time and again from indulging in such polytheistic rituals.

25

व्यक्ताऽव्यक्ता च प्रकृति व्यक्तस्याव्यक्तके लयः। पुमानेकक्षरः शुद्धः सोऽप्यंश परमात्मनः॥

# (ii) Path of Knowledge

श्रेयान् द्रव्यमयात् यज्ञात् ज्ञानयज्ञः परंतप । सर्वं कर्म अखिलं पार्थं ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ।। यत् ज्ञात्वा न पुनः मोहं एवं यास्यसि पाण्डव । येन भूतानि अशेषेण द्रक्ष्यसि आत्मिन अथो मिय ॥

(४/३३ : ३४)

Arjuna, knowledge as a sacrifice is greater than any material sacrifice, for all actions in their entirety culminate in knowledge. When, O Pandava, you have acquired that knowledge, you shall not fall again into this confusion, and by that you shall see all existences in the self, then in Me.

Desires are the seeds from which all actions, right or wrong, arise. But what causes the desire? The answer is: ignorance. Hence, action born eventually of ignorance cannot be a complete fulfilment in itself. It means to say that Karma never ends Karma. Karma produces results to enjoy which the ego has to take up new manifestations in which it would again perform fresh activities and thus circle of action-fruit-action shall continue endlessly. the vicious Knowledge, however, can break it. For knowledge dispels the root cause of action, i. e. ignorance. Once ignorance gone, the sage in a man is born and all his actions in their entirety attain consummation in knowledge. Therefore initially the aspirant has to perform actions that may attain consummation in knowledge, but at the dawn of knowledge, all actions are at once burnt up and seek their Such an enlightened soul sees the entire creation in his Atman, then in Paramatman.\*

[अ०७]

<sup>\*</sup> स्वाह्याय जग्न की सिद्धि ये, ज्ञान होय अनुकरम।
भक्त होय ईश्वर विषे, ऋषि उत्तम कुल होय जनम।।
शास्त्र ज्ञान जो जग्य है, भक्ति जोग सिहत ।
सिद्धि याकी ईश्वर लगे, शुद्ध होय जब चित्त।।
सबे जग्य विधि करम हैं, सिद्धि सिहत भिन्न-भिन्न।
तुत्वदरसी के ज्ञान में, सबे जग्य है लीन।।

महाभूतानि अहंकारः बुद्धिः अव्यक्तं एव च । इन्द्रियाणि दश एकं च पञ्च च इन्द्रियगोचराः ॥ इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं संघातः चेतना धृतिः । एतत् क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारं उदाहृतम् ॥ (१३/५-६)

The five elements, the ego, the intellect, primordial matter, the ten sense-organs, the mind and the five objects of senses, desire and hatred, pleasure and pain, the body, intelligence and fortitude, this is the Kshetra (creation-field) with its evolutes, briefly described.

The world of matter that has been projected around us is also to be studied closely, because to know the world of matter is to know the 'field', the Kshetra, where we have to battle for release and win our victory. The gross elements like earth, fire, water etc. are not the only constituents of the 'field', but even the equipments of perceptions and faculties of thinking also form part of the 'field'. The physical body is the microcosmic field and the vast nature is the macrocosmic field of God. Embodied in the miniature field of the body, the soul, the Kshetrajna, fights his battle for the drama of life.\*

सर्व क्षेत्र जड़ प्रकृति के, भिंन भिंन रूप रंग। क्षेत्रज्ञ चेतन प्रकृति है, व्यापी संग असंग॥ यातें प्रकृति दोऊ मेरी, जड़ चेतन अनाद। जड़ प्रकृति तें होय रथूल, पिड क्रह्मांड जो आद॥

यः तु आत्मरितः एव स्यात् आत्मतृप्तः च मानवः । आत्मिन एव च संतुष्टः तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ न एव तस्य कृतेन अर्थः न अकृतेन इह कश्चन । न च अस्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चित् अर्थव्यापश्रयः ॥ (३/१७-१८)

This man whose delight is in the self alone, who is content with the self, who is satisfied with the self, for him there exists no work as duty that needs to be performed. For him there is here no interest in what is done or what is not done; nor does he depend upon any being for anything, whatever.

The effects of ignorance is desire from which follows all action. Where the desires are not, there cannot be any action. There can be no anxiety to gain a profit or incur a loss. Hence action from such person shall proceed like a reflex action—a sort of bodily or mental reaction to an outside stimulus. But within him would not exist any reason, moral or otherwise, to perform any action. Hitherto the impetus for all action was a mistaken belief in obtaining a particular fruit according to his desire, but now since he has come to know that actions result from earlier actions in a mechanical and determined manner irrespective of whether he assumes their doership or not and that even blessed are the disappointed and the disheartened as they shall be comforted in enlightenment, no impetus for any action is left any more within him.\*

[अ०४]

[अ०३]

<sup>\*</sup> निर्मुक्त होय सब करम तें, त्याग करम फल धाय।
नाम रूप गुन देह रहित, आतम पद ते पाय॥
कहे वेद सब लोग तें, निवृत्त होय जो मन।
शुद्ध हृदय दरसे सही, परम तत्व अर्जुन॥
सांख्य जोग की विधी यह, फलरहित करे करम।
लाभ अलाभ अरु हर्ष शोक, छोड़ साध तूँ घरम॥

प्रकृत्या एव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः।
यः पश्यति तथा आत्मानं अकर्तारं सः पश्यति ।
यदा भूत -पृथग्भावं एकस्थं अनुपश्यति ।
ततः एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ॥
(१३/२९-३०)

Therefore, he who sees that all actions are done only by Nature and that the soul is not the doer, he verily sees. And when he sees that the whole variety of beings is centred in the One and from just That it spreads forth, then he attains to Brahman.

In the presence of the soul, the equipments function, the destinies of matter carve out their ways purely in a mechanical manner. He who is capable of recognising this determinism of nature in which all existences follow their rigorous laws, sees truly that the soul in him is actionless, a passive watcher, only the knower of the field. Then he transcends his own equipments and, having seen how the endless multiplicity of names and forms rise up from him to spread as the universe, he experiences the one self within and without, embracing and penetrating the Almighty. To him what is beyond the universe is Infinity and what has become the universe is the same Infinity.

[अ० १२]

<sup>\*</sup> सबे क्षेत्र है तिगुनमयी, विकार युक्त जो आय।
है निरिवकार प्रकास जीव, विकारी जोगे ये पाय।
या विधि प्रकृति पुरुष की, कह्यो विवेक विचार।
जो लखे विवेकी याही को, तो मुक्ति होय निरधार।।
हूँ करता कारन सबन को, ये विभूति मेरी सब।
जो लखे विभूति मेरी सबे, मोकों पावत तब।।
आतम परआतम को, तत्वज्ञान होय ताय।
तो प्रकृति के गुन छोड़कर, मेरे सरूप को पाय।।

कार्य - कारण - कर्नृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिः उच्यते । पुरुषः सुख-दुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुः उच्यते ॥ यावत् संजायते किंचित् सत्वं स्थावर-जङ्गमम् । क्षेत्र-क्षेत्रज्ञ-संयोगात् तत् विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥ (१३/२०: २६)

Matter is said to be the cause of production of the body and the senses; while the soul is said to be the cause of the experiences of pleasure and pain. Arjuna, whatever being, animate or inanimate is born, know thou that it is sprung through the union of the Kshetra (matter) and the Khetrajna (soul).

The point, worth taking note of here is that the soul, the knower-of-the-field, is in reality does not influence the functioning of the mind-body equipment, the field. On the contrary, on account of his unhealthy contact with it, he is subject to the tragic experiences of the destinies of matter. Then it is not the physical body alone which becomes his field; this wider body of nature also becomes the individual field, a world-field of the same knower in his universal aspect. Thus in each embodied creature, be it a cell, a worm, a human mind, or a world-mind of the Cosmic Being there is this one experiencer, the Kshetrajna Ishvara. And it is on account of the union of this Khetrajna with the Kshetra only that this play of emotions and instincts proceed incessantly from birth to birth.\*

स्कल पिंड के क्षेत्र में, क्षेत्रज्ञ जीव सुहाय। वेराट सरूप के क्षेत्र में, क्षेत्रज्ञ ईश्वर आय॥ प्रकृति पुरुष के जोग कर, गुन को उपज्यो क्षोभ। है विकार ता क्षोभ के, काम क्रोध मोह लोभ।।

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसंकल्प-वर्जिताः । ज्ञानाग्नि-दग्ध-कर्माणं तं आहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ।। या निज्ञा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागति संयमी । यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निज्ञा पद्यतः मुनेः ॥ (४/१९, २/६९)

Such a person is called Jnani (enlightened), he has the universality of outlook and freedom from desires and his actions are burnt up in the fire of wisdom. He keeps awake when it is night to all beings; and where all beings are awake, that becomes the night for him, the seer.

The psychology of an enlightened soul is painted. When the mind ceases to worry over the unknown possibilities and dangers, the self within illumines, in the light of which he sees the perfunctoriness of all the bookish wisdom. The creation is a dream of Akshara Purusha and therefore it is night for Him from which the Tattvadarshi awakens. And that phenomenal world which is the day of the activity of a' beings becomes the night for him. He becomes one with Awareness that needs no instrument of bodily nerves, unconcerned of the fact whether it is day or night of the worldly beings.\*

<sup>\*</sup> शास्त्र ज्ञान सुने सीखे, कहने मात्र है ज्ञान ।

शुद्ध अन्तस्करण होवे सबे, जब दरसे विज्ञान ॥ [अ०३]

महानिशा अव्याकृत विषे, उपजे खपे जीव सोय।

सोई निशा ते जो जगे, सो ही संयमी होय॥

महानिशा में जगत सब, जागत है जो येह।

या सबको सो ही लखे, जगे संयमी तेह ॥ [अ०४]

यदृच्छा-लाभ-संतुष्टः द्वंद्वातीतः विमत्सरः । समः सिद्धौ असिद्धौ च कृत्वा अपि न निबध्यते ॥ गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थित - चेतसः । यज्ञाय आचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥ (४/२२-२३)

Content with what comes to him without effort, free from dualities of joy and grief and envy, even-minded in success and failure, even though he acts, he is not bound. Of such a one whose attachments are sundered, who is liberated, whose mind is firmly founded in wisdom, who does work as a sacrifice, all his actions are dissolved entirely.

The existence of the ego is the existence of conflict and pairs of opposites such as joy and sorrow, health and disease, success and failure etc. Hence it can have no idea of what the pure consciousness means, in absence of the ego and its conflict of opposites. It can, at the most, understand this much that a Jnani, liberated from the chain of all thinking, performs actions much in a spirit of Yajna, i.e. dedicated service that cannot produce any reaction. For all eternity, he has now become the dispenser of the joys, yea, even of the sorrows, of life to beings as get away from the divine home, dispensing these according to their various deserts, according as is right and just.\*

<sup>\*</sup> पर इच्छा तें जी मिले, तासों राखे देह ।

करे अपंण परब्रह्म को, तासों बरते तेह ॥ [अ०६]

सुख दुख प्राप्ति हानि में, हषं शोक निंह जब।

आत्म जोग आनन्द उपजे, सेहेज इन्द्री जीते तब।।

लोक लोक के सुख की, होय वासना नाश।

जीते सेहेज इन्द्री तब, सघे जोग अविनाश।। [अ०४]

अपि चेत् असि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः । सर्व ज्ञानप्ट वेन एव वृजिन सन्तरिष्यसि ।। यथा एधांसि समिद्धः अग्निः भस्मसात् कुरुते अर्जुन । ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात् कुरुते तथा ॥ (४/३६-३७)

Arjuna, even if thou shouldst be the most sinful of all sinners, thou shalt cross over all sins by the raft of knowledge alone. As the blazing fire reduces fuel to ashes, even so does the fire of knowledge turn all actions to ashes.

The fire of knowledge has the capacity to burn up the residual effects of the whole of one's past life, however sinful it might have been. That is why, it is rightly said that religion without knowledge is meaningless, as one can cross over one's painful destinies and reach the shores of the Immortality on the boat of self-knowledge only. In himself the self-realized man sees all things and beings, equally as he sees himself in all things and beings. For him life's uttermost purpose is fulfilled. Whatever wish he hitherto has had, he finds satisfied at once. He has no personal ambitions now, no interests which are opposed to the interest of the whole.\*

<sup>\*</sup> ते आतम परआतम को, तत्व ज्ञान दे सार। ते ज्ञान नौका पर बैठ के, उतरे भव सिधु पार।। ते ज्ञान भस्म करे गुन इन्द्री, करम सकल को जान। धरम जितने ज्ञान बिन, सो आवागमन में मान।।

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेः ज्ञानवान् अपि । प्रकृति यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः कि करिष्यति ॥ श्रेयान् स्वधर्मः विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात् । स्वधर्मो निधनं श्रोयः परधर्मः भयावहः ॥

(3/33:34)

All beings follow their nature, even the enlightened one would act in accordance with one's own nature; what can restraint do? Moreover, better is one's own law or Sva-dharma, though devoid of merit, than the law of another well-performed. Even death in the fulfilment of one's own duty and law brings blessedness; for to follow another's law is perilous and fraught with fear.

The triad of gunas moulds the mind of everyone and even when one attains enlightenment, one's behaviour pattern remains the same. Because the pattern of behaviour and the nature of a Jnani is also decided by the cycle of thinking which he is capable of. As he has no desire of his own to achieve anything, he shall have no desire to exercise any restraint over his behaviour-pattern shaped by his past. He is content with what his body-mind equipment bound by its past habits reacts to it. Though he transcends all such conceptions as vice and virtue and has no evil propensities to contend with, he is also left with no desire to run away from any occasion that may be the cause of suffering, for he knows that such circumstances for injury or destruction to his body can arise only in payment of the last remnants of his obligations incurred in the past.\*

<sup>\*</sup> तत्वदरसी है संयमी, स्थित आनंद सिद्ध घीर ।

प्रारब्ध देही भोगवे, ज्यों नद सागर नीर ।। [अ०४]

भगवान कहे विध पूर्व ये, बिना कर्म शुद्धि नाहे।

दरसे ज्ञान अन्तर सबै, शुद्ध हृदय होय माहें।।

न कर्म करे तो भ्रष्ट होय, सकाम बन्धन रूप।

शुद्ध हृदय आतम करे, दरसे निज सरूप।

## COMMENTS

If thus by knowledge we can gain the fullest satisfaction, then how are we to gain this knowledge? Krishna says: 'know That by humble reverence, by enquiry and service. The men of wisdom who have seen the truth will instruct thee in knowledge."(4/34) Wise men will teach us the truth if we approach them in a spirit of reverence, humility and searching enquiry. By the quality of service and self-effacement, we knock down the obstructing prejudices and let the wisdom shine in us. Thus what is imparted by the teacher and the scriptures and what is realized by the spirit through service and the searching meditation must agree. We may have been dreaming for millions of lives and we meet one day someone who could wake us up. Simply a jerk is needed, just somebody to shock us and we may become alert. Suddenly, the dream would disappear—the dreamland New Delhi and New York, they all disappear.

Mere intellectual apprehension acquired from the scriptures will, however, not do. The ego can study, the ego can make us a great scholar. We may know the Veda, the Quran and the Bible, and still, Krishna says, we may know nothing. Because the truth is not something we have to understand, it is not any information to be received from the outside world. The pundits study all their lives and yet are unable to realise the truth—not because realization is difficult but because when they try to get it through their studies, they miss the whole point. It is as if we are knocking against the wall and trying to enter the room. Jesus says, 'Knock and the door shall be opened unto you.' But if we knock at the wall, no door shall be opened to us. Intellectual appreciation and gathering information is knocking at the wall. It is no use for us to accumulate what others have said, for the truth has nothing to do with the outside world.

The stream of our consciousness can flow in two ways: outwards and inwards. Outward it can flow for many, many lives and will never reach the truth, since the truth is at the source. Realization means going to the source, and the source is within us. Just a turning-in is needed. The Chirstians call it conversion, though many of them mis-interpret it as making a Hindu a Christian. Conversion means a turning of outward flow of consciousness towards the source, then we are convented. This is the knockir at the door. All outward efforts are knocking at the wall.

Mind does not like it, since mind is repetitive. Mind is old and is always against the new. Whatsoever is created by the mind will always be against the new. The mind creates society, state, civilization, morality, religion and what not; and they all are against the new. Even in prison mind creates an adjustment and the prisoner, after remaining in jail for a long time, becomes afraid of coming out of it in freedom. Enligtenment of a Jnani is nothing but absolute freedom; hence the mind can never like it.

Enlightenment happens suddenly like an accident. Our efforts in this direction are nothing but mere preparation or in other words the endeavour that brings tiresomeness. No Sadhana can cause the event of enlightenment occur in one's life. Sadhana is to do this or that, eventually the Sadhak gets frustrated and then one day the transformation happens suddenly like a lightening. There is always a trigger point, the moment we reach there the shot is fired How and when will it occur—nobody knows. But if we do not make any effort, however faulty they may be, then of course it will never occur. That is why, one has to keep on doing something or the other till it happens.

Our mind has many layers, of which thought is the outermost. Thought is a sort of wave in our consciousness. Every thought is created by many waves. Even a single word is created by many waves. Therefore, any single thought is not a single thought; it is a very complex phenomenon. In fact, thought is the outermost form and serveral waves precede it. We become aware of thought only when those waves have accumulated in a condensed state.

Mind has three chief layers; conscious, sub-conscious and unconscious. Thought is the conscious layer of the mind. It is mostly a reaction or reflex of a stimulus. We sight a tasty eatable and soon the thought of tasting it passes our mind.

Then there is the second layer of the subconscious, also known as conscience. For it is created by the accepted norms of the society. It is an outer society or the community as a whole existing in us. It consists of community values, social ideals and parental fixations. The upbringing, the education, the parents, the teachers, the religion and the state—what are they doing? They are creating the subsconscious to control the unruly raw mind. They are helpful, they have utility, but they are the greatest impediment in the path of enlightenment, too. When the seeker of the path of knowledge decides to be established in his self without any ideas, the ideas of the conscious layer do stop but not the thoughts emanating from the subconscious and the unconscious. Therefore, the roles played by these two layers must be understood fully.

The subconscious of every individual is like a computer that keeps on supplying the information previously fed into it. It is ready with all the information and preconceived notions and constantly overfloods our mind. Even when we do not need them, it supplies. The world would be one if there is the same subconscious or absolutely no subconscious.

The third layer of our mind is the unconscious, the layer of instincts and emotional drives. Sex, hunger, love and hatred are the important of these. The outbursts of these instincts in human mind is so wild that the society demands a control over them. They are therefore suppressed. The repression of these instincts acts like a bombshell explosion in the mind. They, then, seek an indirect outlet through reveries, symbols, dreams, literature, art and the like. In most of the minds they generally find expression through reveries and dreams. Many habits acquired by us like driving, typing, smoking etc. are also taken control of by the unconscious layer. That is why we could type while talking or drive while planning for a day's activity.

Now the unconscious is the greatest obstacle for the seeker of enlightenment. The repressed energy of the instincts causes a chain of thought, many of which are quite irrelevant and silly. Since the subconscious does not allow everything to come up, they have to be irrelevant like missing links and loose gaps here and

there. A greater understanding is needed to arrest their emergence. Simply fighting with them will not do. If the master fights with his servant, he accepts equality and with an equal combatant the chances of victory are little. Hence fighting with the thoughts of the unconscious is not advisable. At the best, we can order them like a hypnotist does to his subject. If we have gathered that much confidence of a hypnotizer in us over the baser instincts, probably we can be successful by ordering by saying 'Stop' to them. Control is impossible but mastery is possible since mastery comes from knowledge and control from fear. We control the spread of the diseases or frightening serpents. We become the master of the students or servants when we understand them.

Let us face our biological nature directly without allowing any moralistic controls to distort it. Scientific methods are successful on account of such undisturbed observation. The scientists say that the mind is a tape-recording device. When memory centres are touched with electrodes they start replaying. We feel the same amount of anger, our eyes go red, our body starts trembling, and so on. Now applying the same technique many touchy incidents of our life and many unhealed wounds can be re-enacted from the past with full awareness. We wanted to kill someone, love some other and if all that has remained incomplete, it hovers the mind from the unconscious like a cloud. By moving back on the time track and bringing back incomplete desires and reliving the wounds with perfect awareness we unfathom the unconscious and disperse the cloud of desires wanting to complete their circle in dream or otherwise.

If, similarly, the basic urges of our inner existence are realised in their purity, then a miracle may happen and the unconscious may drop. The mind would no longer be divided into three. In this undivided oneness only mirror-like pure knowing remains without any trembling of thought-wave. Then elightenment happens in which the mind becomes one with the Truth. This is the methodology of the Sankhya in which one attains to discernment by analysis.

Krishna often tells Arjuna that this is his opinion (Mata), meaning thereby that whatever he says is only a combination of

words, a form of scripture; and words can never portray truth. The moment one tries to express truth in words, it becomes an opinion. That is why, the knower of those words and scriptures do not attain to truth by simply knowing the words. Words are a mere pointer and one has to attain to the truth by abandoning all that which is not truth, all that which are only ideas of the truth. Otherwise what would be the need of the Sadhana if one attains to truth by mere words?

No doubt, in the beginning, the aspirant will cling to scriptures, to philosophies and to various systems and will hope that some day, through thinking and deeper thinking, he may come to a conclusion. But, in the end, some day it would flash to him that thinking would not provide to him any conclusion, because it is never conclusive. It only gives us the feeling that soon the door will open. The door opens, of course, but it only opens into another room. Then there is another door. It also opens, but into another room. We are never out of it, since the house of thinking is infinite, containing millions of rooms. The moment this is realised, we come closer to the event of enlightenment. A transformation is to take place any time, a Jnani is to be born.

Presently, J. Krishnamurti has attained to enlightenment through this path of knowledge. He says that he has completely transcended the layer of mind and, as such, the unconscious and subconscious layers of his mind are fully illumined to him as a conscious self. Following his enlightenment, surprisingly, he has renounced the millions worth of property and the headship of the international organisation of the Theosophy. The leaders of this organisation actually raised the Indian child Krishnamurti in the vain hope of making him serve as the incarnation of Christ and Buddha to be the new World Saviour of modern age. But after the event of enlightenment which took place suddenly to him in his thirties, he ridiculed the whole idea of his being an incarnation as well as the entire doctrine of the Theosophy. He is giving discourses, since then, to the people all the world over as to how it is possible for anyone to be enlightened without undergoing any rigorous discipline of any kind of Sadhana and without accepting the

teachings of any religion. His lectures have been published under the titles, "The First and The Last Freedom", "Commentaries on Living", "The Only Revolution", "Freedom from the Known", "Life Ahead", and the like. It would not be out of place, if we look into the exact words he puts forth his unique experiences. A few ideas from his talks and discussions held in some of the Western countries are reproduced here from his collection "Beyond Violence."

You have your image about your wife and children and they have their own image about you. The relationship is always between these images. Someone flatters you, immediately an image is formed. Each reaction of the mind builds an image and then it becomes a part of your unconscious to haunt you again and again in dreams and reveries. If you call me a fool, immediately you become my enemy or I do not like you. If there is no emotional response to your statement and I am intensely aware at that moment without any condemnation, then you will see that no image is formed and then there is nothing to haunt my mind. So inattention breeds images; attention frees the mind from the image. When I am angry and am fully aware of it, then there is not that inattention which allows the past to come in and interfere with the actual perception of anger at the moment. The mind becomes free of it immediately. To correct it brings contradictions and inhibitions but if you watch it, this brings about alteration by itself.

The very act of seeing or listening is attention; this you do not have to practise at all; if you practise you, immediately become inattentive. You are attentive and your mind wanders off; let it wander off but know that it is inattentive; awareness of that inattention is attention. Do not battle with inattention; do not try, saying 'I must be attentive', simply know that you are inattentive. To listen to a bird, to the politician, to the friend, to all the propaganda without condemnation or any reaction is to listen silently and is to hear much more and see much more. Such silence of the mind is beauty in itself. You will see the beauty of it, not the tired boredom of watching, but the beauty of watching. When you have observed very closely your waking hours, you will see that there is attention

in sleep. Then the whole mind is totally awake. The whole of your unconscious becomes conscious.

The worries, the travails, the confusion, the anxiety, the fears and the pleasures go on when one sleeps; they become more symbolised in dreams. Can the mind be completely still during sleep? This is possible, but only when the travail of the day is understood at each minute so that it is finished and not carried over. If one is insulted or praised, finish with it as it happens, so that the mind is constantly freed of problems. Then as you sleep a different kind of quality comes into being, the mind is completely at rest, one is not carrying over the business of the day, one ends it with each day. As you watch thoughts you discover why it goes on. When you learn about thoughts it is finished because there is no resistance to thinking.

Normally the mind creates a centre, the ego, the one who judges, evaluates, condemns, justifies and acts as a censor. That centre divides—when it is your opinion against somebody else's, your property against somebody else's. Do you still think from the same centre? Or is there no centre from which, to think at all, yet there is thought? Do you see the difference? You must work very hard to find out the activities of your mind, how it functions with its self-centred activities, the 'me' and the 'not-me' without any resentment, explanation or justification. In such observation there is no 'observer' at all, there is only observing; there is not the one who observes and is divided off from the thing observed. In such observation there is a continuous learning not a continuous accumulation. Such learning is different from learning in order to accumulate so that from that accumulation one may think and act.

Try sometimes to sit completely still without a single movement of the body, including the eyes. Do it for two minutes. In those two minutes the whole thing is revealed. The body being still, the flow of blood to the head becomes more. But if you sit crouched and sloppy then it is more difficult for the blood to go to the head—you must know all this. But, on the other hand, you can do anything and meditate when in the bus or when you are driving. The body has its own intelligence to function and thought destroys it.

What is silence? Is silence the cessation of that self-created noise which you call thought? Even when there is no more thought, the brain still goes on. Is not silence therefore not only the end of noise of thoughts but the complete cessation of all movement? Observe it, go into it, see how your brain which is the result of millions of years of conditioning is responding to every stimulus instantly; see whether those brain cells, everlastingly active, chattering, responding can be still--not forced and not out of greed saying I must be still in order to have the most marvellous experience.

So when we use the word 'meditation' we do not mean something that is practised. We have no method. Meditation means awareness; to be aware of what you are doing, what you are thinking, what you are feeling, aware without any choice, to observe, to learn. Meditation is to be aware of one's conditioning, how one is conditioned by the society in which one lives, in which one has been brought up, by the religious propaganda—to be aware without any choice, without distortion, without wishing it were different.

There are various forms of fears--fear of illness, old age and death, fear of not being respectable, fear of animals, fear of not getting a job, fear of not being loved, and so on. Fear means one is frustrated of the unknown. But how can one be frightened of something one does not know? If one knows the known, one is free of the known. Fear is there because one does not look to the present, the known. One has never looked at fear. He has never said, 'Well, I am afraid, let me look'. Rather he has said, 'I am afraid, let me go to a doctor or to an employment office--any movement away'. None looks at fear without running away, without trying to overcome it. Just be with it, without any movement away from it and if you do this, you will see a very strange thing happen.

You will see that 'observer' and that which is 'observed' are not two things. If the observer is the observed, what need is there for fear at all or for any decision at all? When there is any form of decision depending on choice, it indicates a mind that is confused. A mind that sees very clearly and does not choose, there is only action. We all so easily come to conclusions, and a mind that has reached

conclusions, is not a free mind. Find out whether one can live without any conclusions; live daily a life without comparisons. You conclude because you compare. Live a life without comparison; let all your actions, however insignificant they are, be completed with complete sincerity, honesty and without any bias or prejudice. It is essential for the realisation of the truth that, at first, one establishes oneself in truth. Let simplicity and modesty become a way of your outlook.

When I speak of all these things, I do not mean that you should make deliberate efforts to practise them. There are two kinds of efforts: the one which are made blindly to obtain a goal, and the other which flow out of compassion and right understanding. The former lead to excitement and frustration if they meet with failure. The latter ones are made out of joy, irrespective of whether the fruits of those efforts are obtained or not. When you make such creative efforts towards awareness, choicelessness, simplicity and truthfulness, you will find out what an extraordinary thing takes place. A new explosion occurs in which the ego-centre of the mind dissolves and the whole of the unconscious becomes conscious. It realises its infinity and its transcendence beyond time and space. Time of the past and the future loses its pseudo-existence. His cousciousness becomes like a window through which the Infinity of Joy peeps in.

Beyond that, every form of description is not the described; you do not talk about it. All that one can do is point to the door. And if you are willing to go, take a journey to that door, then it is for you to walk beyond; nobody can describe the thing that is not nameable, whether that nameable is nothing or everything—it does not matter.

### (iii) Path of Yoga-Meditation

तपस्विभ्यः अधिकः योगी ज्ञानिभ्यः अपि मतः अधिकः । कर्मिभ्यः च अधिकः योगी तस्मात् योगी भव अर्जुन ।। न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रं इह विद्यते । तत् स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेन आत्मिनि विन्दति ।। (६/४६; ४/३८)

However, the yogi is superior to an ascetic and a Jnani, and better than a ritualist, therefore be a Yogi, Arjuna. Certainly, there is no purifier in this world like knowledge; but he who attains purity of heart through practice of Yoga, automatically realises it in his self in course of time.

Having discussed the path of ritualistic Sadhana and the path of knowledge, the path of Yoga-meditation is taken up for close consideration. This latter is definitely better than the other two. The ritualist does not land anywhere and the ascetic simply torments his body and mind for no positive gains. The man of wisdom is, no doubt, on the right path, but the event of enlightenment occurs in very rare persons. The king Janak is not a common phenomenon. It needs the constant efforts of many lives as well as the purified mind for the spark of self-knowledge to illumine. Therefore, to achieve this goal the Sadhak can follow the path of meditation, through the constant practice of which the event of self-realisation automatically takes place in course of time.\*

(अ० =)

<sup>\*</sup> अब कहत जोग की जुगत, जे शुद्ध सन्यासी ते आय। जाको मन सकाम वश, नही ते योगी ताय।। जो जीत इन्द्री जोग निमित्त कर, हृदे होय शुद्ध बुध। करे साधन पिंड इंड के, सघे जोग तब सिद्ध।। दरसे तत्व आतम परम, अन्तर सोई प्रकास। पोहोंचे ब्रह्म निरवान को, होय दुख को नास।।

तं विद्यात् दुखसंयोग-वियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् । सः निश्चयेन योक्तव्यः योगः अनिर्विण्ण-चेतसा ॥ अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः । सः सन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निः न च अक्रियः ॥ (६/२३,१)

Let it be known that which is free from the contact of pain is Yoga. This Yoga should be practised with determination and with a mind steady and undespairing. He who performs his bounden duty without depending on the fruits of action, is the real Sannyasi and Yogi; not he who is without fire and without action.

Yoga is defined and its methodology is explained in detail. It seems the technique of Yoga must have sunk to become mysterious or a very secret practice meant only for a few. The term "Yoga" means contact. Our existence amidst the unreal is painful and our severance from this painful existence is possible by establishing contact (Yoga) with the Real. The severance of contact with the unreal, however, is not practical so long as we are desirous of the worldly fruits of all our ambitious actions. Hence renouncing the fruit of action is the first step on the path of Yoga-meditation. Mere abandoning home and sitting in a forest are not the effective ways for ensuring progress on this path. One can seek loneliness within and remain completely detached from one's kith and kin even staying with them.\*

(अ० ६)

<sup>\*</sup> पर आतम सों जोग करे, जुगत ही आतम साध । तो इन्द्री के सुख दुख को, कबहूँ न होवे बाघ ।। सदा निवृत्त सबतें रहे, रते अन्तर आतम । रहे निश्चय निरवान सों, जो जुगत ये घरम ।।

यं संन्यासं इति प्राहुः योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव । न हि असंन्यस्तः संकल्पः योगी भवति कश्चन ॥ यदा हि न इन्द्रियार्थेषु न कमंसु अनुषज्जते । सर्व-संकल्प-संन्यासी योगारुढः तदा उच्यते ॥ (६/२,४)

Arjuna, what they speak of as Sannyasa, know that to be the same as Yoga, for no one becomes a Yogi who has not renounced the thoughts of the world. When a man ceases to have any attachment either for the objects of senses or for actions and has renounced all thoughts of the world, he is said to have attained to Yoga.

The confusions about the terms which have gained certain established meanings are cleared by Krishna. According to Him the two terms, Sannyasa and Yoga, have the same meaning. For, the emphasis on using either of these two words is on renunciation. But the question is : renunciation of what? Certainly it could not be the renunciation of one's home and family. By renouncing them nothing is gained; otherwise Krishna Himself would be the first man to give them up. The most potent and dangerous inner saboteur is "Sankalpa", the thought of the worldly thing. It is in respect of this that renunciation is needed, and such renunciation of Sankalpa is possible only when our mind is completely detached from all its external activities. If one feels no mental attachment either to the sense-objects or to the actions in the outer world, it is possible that the mind may cease its tossings and agitations prompted by the gurglings of its own inner instincts of willing and wishing. Then the Yogi becomes a true Sannyasi and attains perfection in his Samadhi.\*

<sup>\*</sup> सन्यास जोग सोई किहिए, सो जोगी को जोग।
वितरागी होय जगत तें, मिटे अध्यातम रोग।।
चित शुद्ध होय तबे, करे करम फल नास।
जीते इन्द्री निज ध्यान कर, सो जोगी योग सन्यास।। (अ०९)
रसना इन्द्री स्वाद को, करे त्याग जो साध।
बद्ध शुद्ध आतम जोग के, लागे तबे समाध।। (अ०४)

न अति-अश्नतः तु योगः अस्ति न च एकान्तं अनश्नतः । न च अति-स्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतः न एव च अर्जुन ।। युक्त - आहार - विहारस्य युक्त - चेष्टस्य कर्मसु । युक्त-स्वप्न - अवबोधस्य योगः भवति दुःखहा ।। (६/१६-१७)

Arjuna, this Yoga is not for him who eats too much, not for him who does not eat at all. It is not for him who sleeps too much or keeps awake too much. Yoga becomes the destroyer of sorrows for him who is regulated in diet and recreation, who is restrained in exertion during his action, and who is moderate in sleep and wakefulness.

All the requisites of Yoga are enumerated one by one. It seems even in the days of Krishna persons were as confused about the proper discipline of Yoga as they are now, still, in spite of the Gita's clarifications. In fact, in the spiritual life people are as obstinate and dull-witted as we can see in the worldly life. These persons follow their own whims and at times act ridiculous to show off their abnormality in some field or the other for commanding the respect from the innocent, illiterate and superstitious folks. They would go without food or without sleep for days together to prove to others their false austerity; and some who have acquired some respect in the society as Yogi and have been provided with all the requirements of comfort may over-indulge in the demands of the senses such as excess sleeping, excess eating, eating of Rajasic and Tamasic food, etc. But Krishna says that there is nothing wrong in the desires of eating, sleeping, etc., provided they are obtained in the Sattvic manner and in balanced quantity, that is, as much as needed by the body and not by the sensuous longing.\*

<sup>\*</sup> निद्रा आहार सदा सही, करे न घट बढ़ कोय। सम आसन साधे सदा, घरे घारना सोय ।। (अ०९) सात्विक अहार सबे करे, सात्विक सेहेज सुभाव। करे करम सात्विक सबे, सात्विक गुण है ताय।। (अ०१६)

प्रशान्त-आत्मा विगतभीः ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः । मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तः युक्तः आसीत मत्परः ॥ यतः यतः निश्चरति मनः चच्चलं अस्थिरम् । ततः ततः नियम्य एतत् आत्मिनि एव वशं नयेत् ॥ (६/१४, २६)

Keeping himself perfectly calm and fearless, pledged to the vow of celibacy, and with the mind subdued and harmonised, the vigilant Yogi should sit absorbed in Me. From whatever cause the wavering and unsteady mind wanders away, from that let him restrain and bring it back to the control of the self alone.

Man's energy is spent away in sheer dissipation, when he keeps his mind under heavy excitement, tension and worries or after the charms of sense-organs. The Yogi in whom the taste for the worldly pleasures persists is bound to have these disturbances. Even if he becomes a monk, these will chase him. The only thing he can do in such conditions is to engage himself completely in the inner field of meditation and continue his efforts on self-enquiry. For, the mind must have one field or the other to turn to. Whenever the mind shoots out in search of sense-objects, he should bring it back to the meditation of his own self. He need not gaze at any rare phenomena of nature and should nip in the very curiosity of finding anything beautiful, wonderful and informative in the world. For there is nothing new in the world first of all, secondly whatever looks attractive to-day would lose all its fascination after some time on closer scrutiny. Once this is understood, not only control of sex impulses but also the practice of self-control in all avenues of sense-enjoyment and practice of honesty become easy and the mind revels in the joy of inner silence. Trust in God makes the mind fearless and dependent on Him for fulfilling all the worldly needs. thus leaving the mind completely free to scale into the higher realms of spiritual experiences.\*

<sup>\*</sup> है दिव्य उत्तम अधिकारी के, लखन उत्तम आय।

निर्भय रहे ते जगत में, उत्तम ज्ञान जोग पाय।।

जथारथ बाले सबे, हितकारी रहे भाव ।
लोक लज्या कर्म तें रहित, सदा शुद्ध चित चाव।। [अ०१६]
अशुद्ध चित तें होत है, मन चंचल चहुँ ओर।
दृढ़ वैराग कर छेदिए, रहे समाध में ठौर ।।
जहाँ जहाँ मन मारो फिरे, फेर फेर त्याइए ताहिं।
सनै सनै कर रोकिए, घरे वैराग को माहिं ।। [अ०९]

योगी युञ्जीत सततं आत्मानं रहिस स्थितः ।
एकाकी यतिचत्तात्मा निराशीः अपरिग्रहः ।।
शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरं आसनं आत्मनः ।
न-अति-उच्छ्रितं न अति-नीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तारम् ।।
(६/१०-११)

Let the Yogi try to concentrate his mind, remain in solitude and alone with the mind and body controlled, free from desires and possessions. He should arrange a seat for himself in a clean spot, neither too high nor too low, made of a cloth, a skin, and Kusa-grass one over the other.

The art of meditation has always roused the curiosity of the aspirants, many of whom, though willing to meditate, however, keep on postponing the idea until some teacher guides them in a spoon-feeding manner. Therefore, all the necessary details of meditation are described by Krishna, so that the desirous men may have their daily practice of meditation even if some suitable teacher is not available to them. What one should be particular is that one's mind does not do too much of leap-frogging and remains steady for most of the time. If the place of meditation is in some solitary area and the seat is not too high or too low and if the seat has some Kusa-grass, animal skin and cloth kept one over the other, the external disturbances at least would not distract him. In modern life a sofa chair or any chair with cushion would serve the same purpose as have been the experiences of Swami Vivekanand and Maharshi Aurobindo.\*

<sup>\*</sup> जो सुख एकांत आनंदघन, सो उत्तम पुरुष को जान।
हों आश्रित ता सुख को, प्रगट करूँ निरवान।। [अ०१४]
निद्रा अहार सदा सही, करे न घट बढ़ कोय।
सम आसन साधे सदा, घरे घरना सोय।। [अ०९]
उत्तम पूर्व स्वभाव तें, उत्तम हैं संस्कार।
रहे रुचि उत्तम वस्तु सों, तत्वदरसी को सार।। [अ०१६]

तत्र एकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यत-चित-इन्द्रिय-क्रियः। उपविदय आसने युञ्ज्यात् योगं आत्म-विद्युद्धये ॥ समं काय-द्यिरो-ग्रीवं धारयन् अचलं स्थिरः। संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाऽग्रंस्वंदिशः च अनवलोकयन्॥ (६/१२—१३)

And there taking his place on the seat, he should practise Yoga for the purification of the soul by making his mind one-pointed with the actions of the mind and the senses controlled. Keeping the body, head and neck erect and steady, gazing at the tip of the nose without looking around, he should thus hold his body sirmly.

Adding more details to the technique of meditation it is recommended to the meditator that, lest his bodily movement and surrounding visions may divert his attention, he should keep his body firm, head and trunk erect and his eyes closed, looking within at the tip of his nose. Since looking at the tip of the nose with half-closed eyes has been found causing giddiness and discomfort to many, Shankaracharya suggests that this practice could be done with ease by closing eyes. But all these physical postures cannot guarantee success in meditation. The real aid to meditation is absence of passion, lust and anger, since in their absence only does the mind become pure. The renunciation of the fruit of action to the Almighty makes such self-control over impure thoughts possible.\*

<sup>\*</sup> करे करम फल रहित तें, हृदय शुद्ध होय तब । काम कोघ गुन अहं इन्द्री, जिते विकार ये सब ॥ बिना करम शुद्ध ना होय, हृदय पारथ परमान । शुद्ध हृदय दरसे सही, तत्व रूप जो ज्ञान ॥ [अ० ६]

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः । शीत-उष्ण-मुख-दुखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥ यः मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मिय पश्यति । तस्य अहं न प्रणश्यामि सः च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ (६/७,३०)

When one has conquered oneself and has attained to the calm of self-mastery, one abides in God and is at peace in cold and heat, in joy and sorrow, in honour and dishonour. As he sees Me everywhere and sees all in Me, he never gets separated from Me, nor do I get separated from him.

Having achieved the state of self-control over the wild vagaries of the mind, he develops within him a sort of immunity to the worldly joys and sorrows, as also in honour and dishonour. His life becomes so charged with the presence of God that for all practical purposes he becomes one with Him and plays his allotted role in His disport with full awareness. He wakes up to a consciousness that enjoys and experiences everything, all objectivity, and infact the whole universe in the same way as Brahman does. What he experiences as the universe is only the vibrating thought of Brahman as life pulsating through all space and time; and he feels himself to be one with that life and therefore with the whole universe as now appears.\*

<sup>\*</sup> हों ईश्वर सब जीव को, कारन करता रूप।

ये अंश जीव मेरो सही, प्राप्ति मोहि सरूप।। [अ०१४]

यातें मों बिन कछू नहीं, सूत्र मणि ज्यूँ आय।

यों चैतन्य प्रकृति आकासवत्, व्याप रही जड़ माय।। [अ०१०]

#### COMMENTS

The Gita says, the event of enlightenment occurs very rare, once in many millions. Therefore, the probability of the success through the path of knowledge is very low. After several births of Sadhana a man could reach the stage of such discernment when a Janak or a Krishnamurti is born. As such for most of the people the set path of Yoga-meditation with all its rules and regulations is superior to the path of knowledge. (6/46) Though progress on the path of meditation is slow and one may have to tread through several lives of Sadhana before reaching the end, however the satisfaction to the meditator is that no effort of his is wasted and at each advancing step he acquires some powers to encourage him. Even if he fails to reach the goal of perfection in this life, the lessons of his efforts abide with him after death. He is born in the house of such as help him in his progress from the point he has discontinued in the previous birth. Then, eventually, the event of enlightenment occurs to him. (4/38) The life of Buddha, Raman, Aurobindo or the holy Mother is a case in point.

The practical method of this path of meditation is described elaborately by Krishna. He speaks of celibacy and fearlessness needed for a Yogi. When the bio-energy of a man flows downwards, it activates the sex centre and brings to him the sensuous pleasures. If on the contrary it begins to flow upwards towards the third eye (in the centre of two eyes) it results in spiritual bliss, having attained to which the Yogi can nevermore long for the pleasures of senses. Fearlessness is also needed for a Yogi, for in meditation several occasions come when he experiences the death of his mind. The meditator has not to be afraid of such moments, he should take a plunge into that moment of death of his mind. Mind has to die before one becomes enlightened.

Physical postures, scating arrangement, logical thinking, spirit of detachment, the point of concentration are the various other

factors that are described by Krishna as helpful hints. In regard to these helpful aids to successful meditation Patanjali has actually developed the whole science of Yoga. Patanjali is therefore regarded as the greatest scientist of the inner journey to the realization of the self. Those who enter the inner world of one's self through the other paths are almost always poets, but Patanjali has a scientific mind and he investigates into the inner world much as a physicist does now, observing all the data of experiences and comparing and checking them with the practical results as well as with the experiences of others. That is how Patanjali has become the first and the last word, since for five thousand years nobody could improve upon him.

He has divided the path of Yoga-meditation into eight steps of practice calling those steps as Yam, Niyam, Asan, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dharna, Dhyan, and Samadhi. The first step of Yam is self-restraint through five vows of non-violence, truthfulness, honesty, sexual continence and non-possessiveness. Practice of these five vows of Yam gives a new direction to one's old life and makes it a little more self-centred. It kills the ego. Either the ego can exist or these five vows can be fulfilled. Both are not possible. Since Yoga is a world of infinite power, it is necessary that before entering into the temple of power, we drop the ego outside the temple. Moreover, direction of one's life in proper way creates the centre. Afterwards, the centre starts giving direction towards a life which has a discipline and regularity. This is Niyam which is equally needed along with the breaking the life of slavery to instincts.

Many think that to be slave to all the vagrant thoughts is freedom. To be slave to violence, cheating, stealings and lies for all sorts of acquisitions and licentiousness prompted by the base instincts is freedom. But it is not so. Yoga says that only a disciplined man with regulated life and observance of the basic rules of living becomes free in all the real sense of the word. Then alone is he able to acquire superhuman Yogic powers and enjoy the bliss of life in true sense. When a person makes a point to speak the truth and guard himself from all lies he has to acquire such a power of speech that whatever he says even unknowingly

also comes to be true. If one wants to grow, one needs discipline—discipline over the base instincts and discipline over the body and the mind. The five vows of Niyam are meant to exercise discipline over the body and the mind. Purity, contentment, austerity, self-study, and surrender to God are the five laws of Niyam to be observed for discipline over the body and the mind.

The vows of Yam are like a bridge between I and others; the vows of Niyam have nothing to do with others—they are the bridge between I and myself. Yam is a methodology to settle things with others. By becoming non-violent, truthful and non-acquisitive we are putting an end to our conflicts with the outside world. The outside world has to be calmed down so that the Yogi may be in a deep friendship with the whole. In that deep friendship only, growth is possible. Otherwise, worries from the outside will distract him time and again from his chosen path of meditation. If we are not at peace with others, we cannot be at peace with ourself. Yam is therefore a more conscious behaviour. The Yogi is not to react unconsciously like everyone else. He reacts only when there is absolute necessity. Once in this first circle of his being the periphery of outside world has no waves, suddenly a calm and a collected phenomenon happens to his being. Niyam, on the other hand, takes further care of the cleanliness of his body and mind. Purity, contentment, etc. are the creative aids. Their non-observance may not restrict the growth of a Yogi like the non-observance of Yam may do; but their observance will necessarily help him in his inner journey.

The first law of Niyam is purity which means purity about food, purity about body and purity about mind. These are the three layers of purities. Krishna speaks of the three qualities of everything: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Tamas means heavy and dull. If we eat rich and polluted things, those eatables make our body heavy and lazy. Sattva means light. If we just live on milk and fruit we will feel very light the very next morning. Rajas means full of activity, dynamic. There are Rajasic foods that make us earth-rooted and completely world-minded. There are Sattvic foods which make us sky-oriented, that is to say, they bring us under the influence of grace. Gravitation of Tamas qualities pulls us

down and grace of Sattvic qualities pulls us up. In case of Sattvic food like fruit etc. the body is left with very little stuff to digest; as a result the bio-energy flows upwards and is freely available for meditative purposes. For an ordinary man all such care about food etc. does not matter because he is not going anywhere. Once we start our journey on the path of spirituality, everything matters. Being dirty may be a help in the market, but not in the temple. If one is sitting under a shower and humming the "Mantra", after bath one will feel totally different; he will have a different quality of lightness of Sattva around him.

Such a man who feels heathy, light and fresh will be able to understand what contentment is. Otherwise it remains a word, often implying the idea of consolation. Contentment is not consolation. The frustrated and the crippled console themselves upon their failures. But a man of contentment is spiritually happy with what he has got. Contentment is seeing not through desires but through awareness when everything looks just perfect. A non-contented mind is a no-sayer. And when we say no, mind can think on and on because no has no end. It is the world of desires and always travels ahead of us. We have ten rupees, the desire says one hundred and when we have one hundred, the desire says one thousand. The world of desire is never with us. Always travelling ahead of us it never meets us anywhere. It is on the horizon. Desire ahead, then discontentment is our state. Hence contentment says yes to every situation. Why? Because the mind of the contented has surrendered itself to God. Austerity is then possible after contentment, because after contentment austerity cannot become a showy thing of assumed saintliness. A contented man lives a simple life. He may live in a palace or in a hut without being perturbed. Being non-acquisitive he just does not cling to anything. Krishna calls it 'detachment' (Vairagya). When a man is completely detached from the worldly affairs and absolutely austere in his living, he will be left with nothing to think about except his own self. In absence of detachment if the Yogi practises meditation, he is often frustrated to see the hankering of his mind after the pleasures of life. But if his detachment is complete, his mind is automatically withdrawn to his inner self, for there is nothing left outside in the world to focuss

his attention.

Asan brings a further discipline in the Yogi's life when he sits unmoved in a relaxed posture. Asan means a relaxed posture in which the meditator finds himself perfectly comfortable. He is so relaxed in it that he becomes restful in it and there is no need to move the body at all. When suddenly we feel an urge to scratch, the body tries to bring us down because hitherto we have never tried to quieten it. It was always engaged in some movement; even when we sat down we kept our legs shaking. Therefore, just sitting unmoved seems to break its old habits. For some time it resists. However if we do not pay heed to its inconveniences, it begins to enjoy rest. Since we have never given rest to it in our waking hours, it does not know any rest. It is always restless, hopping from one activity to another. Asan means rest, to be in deep rest; and if one can do that, Patanjali says many things will become possible to the Yogi. Krishna says, the proper seat of the Yogi should be neither too high nor too low and there should be Kusa-grass and deer-skin over it. This suggestion is very meaningful in the sense that the skin of a deer or a tiger is a bad conductor much as the Kusa-grass or a wooden seat is. In meditation, at times, there is an electric charge in the meditator and if the seat is bad conductor, it helps the Sadhak in conserving it.

Krishna also suggests to the Yogi to fix his gaze at the tip of his nose. Why? Because he could thereby put pressure on the third-eye (Ajna-Chakra) in-between the eye-brows. Such pressure opens the third eye and the Yogi's level of consciousness shifts from the physical to the mental plane. Fixing the gaze at the tip of the nose activates the third eye (Ajna-Chakra). Secondly, with its constant practice the world begins to appear dreamy in its content. Its immateriality becomes evident. Krishna's hint of sitting straight means that with his head and trunk in the angle of 90° the Yogi can move outside the gravitational pull of the earth when the occasion demands.

Now when the body can be put in rest this way, he can regulate his breathing. He can then move deeper, because breath is the bridge from the body to the soul, from the body to the mind. Regulated breathing brings power over the mind. The mind is

closely linked with the rhythm of the breath. Anger changes its rhythm, sex makes it go very fast. Anger and sex cannot exist with a particular type of breathing in our body. Whenever we become passionate a discord exists and the accord is lost. If we keep our breath relaxed and in rhythm, anger and sex disappear. In passionate mind the proportion of inhalation is longer than exhalation and when the mind is filled with compassion or moments of tranquillity, exhalation becomes longer than inhalation. Hence, the science of breath-control (Pranayam) prescribes for the Yogi to inhale fully in a shorter time, then to control the inhaled breath for four times to the length of inhaling time, and finally to exhale it taking double the length of time to the time spent in inhaling. With this small practice for two or three minutes a day the Yogi may soon realize how Pranayam accelerates his progress in his inner journey which is known as the next step of Pratyahar.

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Pratyahar, says Krishna, is returning home, i.e. bringing the mind from wherever it drifts to a point of concentration. Pranayam has given the rhythm. Now the Yogi knows the whole spectrum: he knows in what rhythm he is nearest home and in what rhythm he is farthest from himself. Violent, sexual, jealous, angry and possessive he will find he is far away from himself. In compassion, love, prayer and truth he will find himself nearer home. If Pranayam is the bridge from the out to the in, Pratyahar brings one near the gate. Thought and breath are so intertwined, one has only by an act of will to pay attention to, and regulate one's rate and mode of breathing in order to produce the corresponding effect upon his thoughts. Hence the stilling of the breat h tends to still the thoughts. Thus by quietening the body and the thought., the Yogi prepares the conditions in which the Infinite Spirit manifests Itself to him. The Yogi comes nearer his innermost core, just at the gate of his own being. Then is the possibility of the next step of concentration, i.e. Dharna.

Now the Yogi can become capable of bringing his mind to one object which may be the image of his master or some Deity or a Mantra. First he gave direction to his mind and body; then he gave direction to his life energy; now he can give direction to his consciousness. Now the consciousness cannot be allowed to go anywhere; it has to be brought back to a goal from all direction.

The time gap between two thoughts—however infinitesimal and however unnoticed it must necessarily be—is the moment when the ego comes unconsciously into contact with the Overself. Consciousness is to be caught between two alternate ideas and thus cleared of and kept attentively alert and wakefully alive to its own character at the same time. The best way of tackling the fickleness of the mind is to watch its free flow of thinking. If the Yogi dives deep into his mind, he will find desires, layers of desires. They gurgle up there so long as he is convinced of getting happiness through their fulfilment. Some day his understanding and past experience lead him to realise that what he was seeking was always within him. Suddenly, his consciousness is clear of the cloud of desires; there is then no flicker in the flame of his consciousness.

Now the Yogi is able to concentrate on one point to the extent that he soon comes to a stage where the object of concentration has begun to disappear and only the subjectivity remains with intense awareness. This is the state of meditation, Dhyan. The object has dropped, but the subject has not fallen into sleep. Dharna is concentration in which state something is there to concentrate upon. But in meditation (Dhyan) nothing is there, only the feeling of "I" persists. The Yogi feels that he just is. This is not ego, the Ahankar. It is Asmita, just "am-ness". A shadow-like phenomenon of his beingness hovers around him. Ahankar is vanity and is the wrong sense of 'I' which comes from saying 'no'. Asmita is the right sense of 'I' which comes from saying yes. Both are 'I', one is impure the other is pure. No is destructive and should be dropped as far as possible in use. Even if one is required to say it, it should be said in such a way that it has the appearance of yes. Then the force of ego begins to dissolve. The proportion in which the ego dissolves, its dreams and its fantasies also begin to disappear to that extent. This is how one grows in being. One becomes a knower, not a knowledgeable person. In that aloneness of consciousness there is tremendous beauty, perfect simplicity, innocence and austerity. Centred in that consciousness there is no worry, no anguish, no hatred, no love, no anger. Everything has disappeared; only awareness remains.

If such a thing is not happening to the longtime meditators, they should understand that their impure minds have a weight of desires and Vasanas; like a stone they hang. The unfulfilled desires hankering to be fulfilled are Vasanas. The incomplete always tries to be completed. A thing can be dropped only when it is completed. A painter cannot forget his painting if it is not complete. It haunts the mind, it does not allow one to attain to the pure being of awareness. It lives like an under-current in the mind, always asking to be completed. Therefore, first those desires which have run their course of their life must be completed to attain to the state of Samadhi. For Samadhi means Samadhan: everything is achieved. Then the further precaution is to be taken by discriminating between what is real and what is unreal. Often to people even fantasies become real and affect their life. When any fantasy starts affecting us it looks more real. In the night we dream that someone is sitting on our chest with a knife and we scream. we take the dream as real, it affects us. It becomes real. If we take something real it becomes real. Most of our life is spent in drawing satisfaction from our dreamy fantasies.

If we eat every day at 12 noon we feel hungry by 12 noon. One day we have not eaten food till 2 o'clock and the hunger is gone; we are not feeling hungry anymore. If the hunger was real, it would have been increased after two hours, but it has on the contrary disappeared. It means it was not a real bodily need, it was an imaginary need, an unreal one. We see in the ancient tribes that child-birth is completely a painless affair. A woman is working in the field and the child is born. There is not a single person to look after her; she will look after herself. She will put the child under the tree, do her whole day's work and take the child back by the evening. It is so simple, as it is happening in animals. But in the so-called modern civilized world child-birth is a very fussy event in a life of a woman. She nurtures so much psychological fright about it that her fear only does not allow the child to come out freely. She clenches her whole mechanism in fear, while the child needs a relaxed passage to come out. This conflict causes a severe pain to both. Now all such pains and distresses of our life are the creation of our mind, That is why, Krishna prescribes Vivek and Vairagya,

discrimination and detachment. While we are discriminating from the unreal, we become aware of many false things and our life becomes less artificial and simpler in its content. By watching what is real and what is unreal awareness grows and along with it the spirit of detachment.

The Gita's term Vivek or discrimination has to be understood properly, because it is often confused with analytical reasoning. There are three types of logic: one is bad logic, Kutark. It is a reasoning oriented towards the negative, always thinking in terms of no, in which we deny, doubt and are nihilistic. Then there is a simple reasoning, Tark. Simple reasoning, too, leads nowhere. It moves in a circle since it has no goal. One goes on reasoning without ever coming to any conclusion, because reasoning can come to a conclusion when there is a goal from the very beginning. Patanjali uses the term Vitark, which means special reasoning, a reasoning for arriving at some conclusion. This is what is meant by the term discrimination of the Gita. A discriminating person looks to the positive side. He counts the flowers and forgets the thorns. It is not that there are no thorns, but he is not concerned with them.

Krishna says, if you are attuned with the positive reasoning. then you can be a thinker, never before. A madman is a man who has millions of thoughts and no thinking, so also other so-called sane persons, but deluded in ignorance, are possessed with thoughts onlythoughts acquired from the parents, schools and from the persons or books available to them. These thoughts are not ours. Sometimes we are sitting and suddenly we become sad for no reason at all. A thought is passing; we are just in the way. It is an accident. We go to a new city in a hotel to stay and suddenly we feel a change within us. Thousands of thoughts are filled in that room, vibrating there. It is not empty, as we think it is. When we go in we come under their influence. The same happens when we go to a place where someone has realised God. Badrinath, Gaya, Mecca or Terusalem are the places where thousands of sages have become enlightened. They have left a vacuum there dissolving the thought currents of the ignorant persons.

But at other places each thought has its own life-force. It moves and possesses like mind. For such occasions, Patanjali's

advice is to ponder over the opposite thoughts whenever the mind is disturbed by wrong thoughts. If one is feeling discontented, let him contemplate about contentment. If one is angry, let him think about compassion and immediately the energy would change. This is how one can fight out with the outside thought. But a greater emphasis is to be laid on thinking. Thoughts are borrowed things, thinking is a quality of one's inner being. In awarenss thinking flowers and encouters situation. A problem is there: the Yogi having reached the state of meditation faces it now with his total awareness. Then there arises an answer which guides him in true sense. The emptiness of awareness has its own voice; listening to it means leaving everything to it. Then nothing goes wrong-that is the very criterion of being right. Out of nothingness whatever comes is good; even going astray also helps. This is creative thinking. A man of creative thinking would use his consciousness each time there is a problem. He does not think what is right and what is wrong. He simply feels. He just throws his awareness everywhere and in that light he moves. Wherever he moves is right. Right does not belong to things, it belongs to the one who moves. It is not that Krishna did right things-no! Whatever he did was right. On the other hand, those who work under tension fail to achieve anything by exercising their thinking.

A time comes with gradual practice of such awareness when Asmita also disappears, when the Yogi no longer knows that he is. The Yogi then enters into the state of trance, Samadhi. The first state of Samadhi is with a subtle purified mind (Samprajnata), in which the flame of awareness illumines the subtle forms of ideas arising now and then in the purified mind. The second stage of Samadhi is that when the mind disappears and there are no thoughts— Asamprajnata Samadhi. But Patanjali says that even when the mind

<sup>1.</sup> Fasting is an effective way to increase the intensity of awareness. In long fasts we can attain to a certain quality of awareness which takes a long time in normal course. But with many it is just a starvation, because they do not understand the use of its methodology.

disappears, then, too, subtle seeds of the past are retained by the unconscious. The journey is not complete because conscious mind is not the only phase of the mind. Just behind the layers of the conscious mind is a vast continent of the unconscious. There are seeds of all one's past lives in the unconscious, it is the seat of the lust for life and repository of all latent Vasanas. Therefore, having attained to no mind state of Samadhi, the Yogi is established in Samadhi with seeds—sabeej Samadhi. Only when those seeds are also burnt, one attains Samadhi without seeds, Nirbeej Samadhi. The traveller has come home.

But if the Yogi has not attained to this final state of his journey and departs from the body, Krishna assures that still his efforts would not go in vain. Such Yogis are called "Yoga-bhrasta" who take another birth to complete their Sadhana. If the Yogi has attained to the state of meditation, i. e. awareness and thus dies in perfect awareness, his next birth will be perfectly aware. Death is one aspect of life, birth is another. A Yogi has to see both the aspects of life in full awareness. With full awareness he enters into another conception. He floats around a couple making love and with the first seed he enters with full awareness. For nine months in the mother's womb he is aware. He feels very comfortable for nine months and for all practical purposes those nine months are without any news, it is a period of relaxation, total rest. But after those nine months when the child is to be born and to pass through the narrow vaginal canal, it is such a sudden shock and so painful an affair that never again will there be such a shock to the nervous system in the whole life-time of that Yogi. This becomes the last experience of intense pain to an aware Yogi. Such Yogis then close their accounts of past Karmas. A man spat on the Buddha. Buddha wiped his face and asked 'What else do you have to say ?' The man felt humiliated. Buddha turning to his disciples explained: 'Don't be worried. I must have done something wrong to him in the past. Now the account is closed.' Maharshi Raman had also displayed the same attitude when he was beaten by the thief who took away the articles of the Ashram after beating the Maharshi. Strictly speaking, after experiencing the Infinite Bliss how can

the Yogi react to such trifles of this world? The moment one gets diamonds in one's hands, less precious stones get automatically neglected. The very first stage of Samadhi is a state of ecstasy and bliss. This is a point of no return, from here nobody falls and comes back to the world.

Now this whole journey can be made in two ways, by riding in a bullock cart as well as by jet flight. Many start straight with meditation and find that other steps are being carried out automatically in due course of time. With jet speed there is some safety. With jet speed, the Yogi will have no time to notice the psychic realms lying along the path of Samadhi. With the pace of a bullock cart the Yogi will come across several psychic powers which may catch him. For our mind is basically power-seeking; and power corrupts. Absolute power which a Yogi may get corrupts absolutely. In fact, outer power cannot corrupt as much as inner power can. Outer power is always dependent on others. Hitlar, Stalin, Lincoln and others had achieved their power which was based entirely on outer forces. Such people build a great pyramid and stand on the peak, but if a single brick is taken out the whole structure tumbles; whereas in the case of inner power, the Yogi is absolutely independent, hence he can become more ego-centric. Power is basically violent; it is a desire to be over others. Mind being egoistic is poweroriented and, as such, it can be violent as a political leader as well as a spiritual leader. That is why mostly the Yogis following the bullock cart journey and acquiring psychic occult powers are caught somewhere and do not reach the goal.

The jet speed Yogi just passes the psychic realms without noticing it. He knows that his goal is absolute bliss and, caught by any kind of partial happiness, he can come back to the same world where for many lives he never bothered to seek even the greater happiness of the divine psychic realms. It is not that the jet speed Yogi does not feel the presence of those occult powers; he does become conscious of them when people around him say that such and such miracle has happened with them, but he looks up and says, 'because of God, not because of me. I am no one.' When people were healed by the touch of Jesus, Jesus always said, 'Not because of me, but because of Him. I am no one. I am just

a servant.' Ramkrishna Paramhansa was conscious of all the powers around him, but they were God-oriented and God-centred to him. He never made them ego-centred.

Hatha-yoga lays emphasis on the experiences of psychic realms and occult powers. As a matter of fact, it has given the poweroriented technical name of Kundalini to the organic unity of energies hidden in every man. Kundalini is a Hatha-yogic name of human energy which is ordinarily not functioning. Only a part of it functions as our conscious mind, the major part of it is dormant as our unconscious. Just as the science of physics has been able to split atom and release vast amount of atomic energy, similarly the science of Hatha-yoga says that there are methods to realise the remaining potential of human energy. It is sleeping like a snake. Disturb a snake and it stands on its tail just as energy phenomenon. Hatha-yogis have experienced that the unconscious potential of human energy is stored at the sex-centre and when the sex energy flowing downwards is sublimated in its upward journey, the stored energy symbolically named as Kundalini awakens and begins to rise up towards the brain-centre.

The Hath-yogis tap this energy through various complicated bodily postures (Asanas) and different methods of breath-control (Pranayam), since according to their science each posture and every way of breathing have a corresponding effect on the original energy source and its upward growth. It passes through seven centres which are called "Chakras". Chakras means moving-a wheel, a dynamic rotating centre. As the potential energy passes through these centres, each wheel by its own rotation becomes alive and creates its own new energy, bringing richer experiences of happiness and psychic powers to the Yogi. Many efforts have been made to find these Chakras in the physical body, but they are said to be in the etheric astral body. Only corresponding points are there in the physical body as is shown in the Kundalini diagrams and those points catch the sensations and vibrate as the energy passes through them.

There are many ways one may talk of the energy of the self. Kundalini is only one word and Hath-yoga is just one method. We can use many more words and many more methods to return to our true self.

(iv) Path of Desireless Action

श्रैयः हि ज्ञानं अभ्यासात् ज्ञानात् ध्यानं विशिष्यते । ध्यानात् कर्मफल-त्यागः त्यागात् शान्तिः अनन्तरम् ॥ सन्यासः कर्मयोगः च निःश्रयसकरौ उभौ । तयोः तु कर्मसंन्यासात् कर्मयोगः विशिष्यते ॥ (१२/१२;४/२)

Knowledge is better than practice of rituals; better than knowledge is Yoga of meditation, and better than meditation is the renunciation of the fruit of action, i.e. Karmayoga; on such renunciation follows immediately peace. Both the Sannyasa path of knowledge and the path of Karmayoga indeed lead to the highest bliss, but of the two Karmayoga is superior

to Sannyasa.

The Shastras are many, and many are the paths of Sadhana advocated by them. But Krishna implies here that all these paths are not one and the same, nor do they lead the Sadhak to the same goal. The path of rituals can simply guarantee transitory heavenly pleasures. The path of knowledge is therefore better than the path of rituals, and the path of meditation is better than the path of knowledge inasmuch as every meditator gets an opportunity of gradual unfoldment of his inner personality. The enlightenment of a Jnani is sudden and happens once in a million after a long waiting and infinite patience. As a matter of fact both these paths are very difficult to pursue; but if the abandonment of fruit of action is added to these two disciplines, they also become easy to follow. For, mental tension is immediately done away with following the giving up of all the expectations of fruit in the future. All our energies are wasted in our anxieties and fears of a horrid future. Such state of mind can never attain to knowledge or meditation, unless the gushing out of our mind into the anticipated fruits of future is arrested.\*

अ० ७

[अ० १७]

तप जग्न केते जग्न कर, जो इच्छा चित चाहे। सिद्धि याकी चौदे लोक लों, जनमे जहाँ इच्छाए।। शास्त्र ज्ञान जो जग्य है, भगत योग सहित । सिद्धि याकी ईश्वर लगे, शुद्ध होय जब चित्त ।। ध्यान जग्य सबके परे, लख सहप धरे ध्यान । ते प्राप्त होय तेहि पद को, जाको इष्ट जो जान ॥ करम काण्ड उपासना, ज्ञान काण्ड निरधार। ये अधिकारी तीनों कांड के, देखो सोच विचार।।

ज्ञेयः सः नित्यसंन्यासी यः न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति । निर्द्वन्द्वः हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात् प्रमुच्यते ।। यत् सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तत् योगैः अपि गम्यते । एकं सांख्यं च योगं चयः पश्यति सः पश्यति ॥ (४/३, ५)

The Karmayogi who neither loathes nor desires should, in fact, be considered a perpetual Sannyasi, for Arjuna, free from dualities he is easily released from bondage. That place which is reached by the Sannyasi is reached by the Karmayogi also. Therefore, he who sees Sannyasa and Karmayoga as one, understands really.

There is a difference which is prominently noticeable between a saffron-robed Sannyasi and a householder Nishkam Karma-yogi. The former attaches a great importance to his Ashram duties, mannerisms and everyday rituals; whereas the latter has no preferences and is beyond all thought of good and bad. Therefore, there is seen no struggle in him for any spiritual attainment. His desireless action purifies his mind and gives him a greater poise than the quietude normally attained by meditation. Then, the same final experience is attained by him to which a Sannyasi attains after strenuous efforts and austere living. The Tattvadarshi, therefore, does not see any difference between the two in so far as the attainment of the goal is concerned.\*

<sup>\*</sup> अब कह्यो चहत भगवान यह, सांख्य योग परमान।

करम योग की युक्ति कहे, कहे सांख्य योग को जान।।

हे पारथ परमान यह, निहकरम निरघार।

होय शुद्ध यह करम कर, सांख्य योग को घार।।

कहे भगवान पारथ प्रतें, ये आज्ञा विघ दोय।

ए दोऊ निष्ठा एक योग की, तत्वदरसी की होय।।

अ० ४]

<sup>[</sup>अ० 5]

संन्यासः तु महाबाहो दुखं आप्तुं अयोगतः । योगयुक्तः मुनिः ब्रह्म न चिरेण अधिगच्छति ॥ न इह अभिक्रमनाशः अस्ति प्रत्यवायः न विद्यते । स्वल्पं अपि अस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतः भयात् ॥ (५/६; २/४०)

But, Arjuna, Sannyasa is difficult to attain without practising Karmayoga; whereas the Karmayogi who is earnest attains to Brahman in no time. Moreover, in this path of disinterested action, there is no loss of effort, nor is there any harm of contrary result. Even a little practice of Karmayoga protects one from great fear and tension.

Without having a thing we cannot renounce it. The Sannyasi who thinks that he has nothing more to renounce, is mistaken. For hopes and ambitions are always in him and prompted by them he keeps on performing some action or the other. Therefore, he cannot be truly established in his Sannyasa unless he perpetually keeps on renouncing all those desires and the resultant actions. And if one has to renounce desire every moment and develop an attitude of desireless action, then the life of a householder is as good as the life of a Sannyasi. In certain respects, in fact, the life of a householder is better than the life of a Sannyasi in the sense that the former is not exposed to any artificial suppression of passions and the dangers of such suppression. There is no risk in his life; no harm of repression or of monotonous living can accrue to him; whereas for a Sannyasi the chances are that the very same meritorious acts of his Sannyasa life, if not performed faithfully, might result in sins and defame him. On account of absense of these dangers an earnest Karmayogi leading the worldly life can attain to Brahman speedily.\*

<sup>\*</sup> भगवान कहे विध पूर्व ये, बिना कर्म शुद्धि नाहें। दरसे ज्ञान अन्तर सबै, शुद्ध हृदय होय माहें॥ काम क्रोध अहं लोभ मोह, ग्रुन अंग इन्द्री आसक्त। ज्ञान आत्म आवे कैसे इन्हें, यातें भयो भ्रम यक्त॥

विषयाः विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः । रसवर्जं रसः अपि अस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ विहाय कामान् यः सर्वान् पुमान् चरति निःस्पृहः । निर्मामः निरहंकारः सः शान्ति अधिगच्छति ॥ (२/४९, ७१)

Secondly in case of a Sannyasi who abstains from feeding senses, no doubt the objects of senses cease for him but the longing for those objects remains; while this longing also leaves the Karmayogi on seeing the Supreme. He immediately attains peace as he gives up all desires and moves free from attachment, egoism and thirst for enjoyment.

The objects in the outer world cannot themselves tease a man by their existence or non-existence. It is the inner taste for them that chains a man to them. Therefore, when the objects of the outer world cease to fascinate a man, he becomes a true Sannyasi even while living in the world like an ordinary householder. He, instead of running away from the obligations of his life, conquers the mental agitations created by the yearning for the worldly objects and fights the battle of life by practising detachment, by meditating on his true self within, and by withdrawal of his mind from all the passionate longings. Gradually, some day, the fetter of individuality, the illusory ego, forged with the links of experiences breaks and the self awakens to the presence of the Divinity.\*

<sup>\*</sup> कह्यो तबे भगवान ने, हे पार्थ निश्चें घार ।

मिटे मूल ते कर्म सब, मन के सबे विकार ॥ [अ०४]

सदा निवृत्त सबतें रहे, रते अन्तर आतम ।

रहे निश्चय निरवान सों, जो जुगत ये घरम ॥

विषय सुख भावे नहीं, आतम सुख से रंग ।

पोहोंचे निज निरवान पद, सुघ बुघ सब अंग ॥ [अ० ६]

कि कर्म कि अकर्म इति कवयः अपि अत्र मोहिताः। तत् ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यत् ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसे अशुभात् ॥ कर्मणः हि अपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः। अकर्मणः च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणः गतिः ॥ (8/ 98, 99)

But what is action? What is inaction?—as to this even the wise are bewildered. Therefore, I shall expound to you the truth about action, knowing which you shall be delivered from its evil effect. One has to understand what action is and likewise one has to understand what wrong action is, and even so one has to understand what inaction and special action are. Because mysterious are the ways of action and imponderable is the nature of Karma.

In every action, at times, more than one motive are behind The result is some good may follow from an action that is supposed to be wrong and so also some bad effect may accrue from an action that is considered to be virtuous one. Therefore, even the sages are perplexed to decide which action should be called noble and which one to be called evil. Only the Tattvadarshi can properly discriminate between the two. Krishna provides some hints to reach such discrimination by classifying action into three categories: right action, inaction and special action. Between them there are very subtle distinctions that merit close consideration, or else even the sages and the most pious ones could get confused and may take their lives to wrong ends.\*

उत्तम करम की विधि को, लखे विवेकी कोय। सोई करम मैं कहत हों, लखे मुक्त ते होय ॥ कर्म अरु अकर्म को, बूझे सोच विचार । विकर्म उत्तम करम की, है गहन गति अपार।।

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयः विदुः । सर्व-कर्म-फल-त्यागं प्राहुः त्यागं विचक्षणाः ।। त्याज्यं दोषवत् इति एके कर्म प्राहुः मनीषिणः । यज्ञ-दान-तपः-कर्म न त्याज्यं इति च अपरे ।। (१८/२-३)

The sages understand by 'renunciation' the giving up of all works prompted by desire; men of wisdom, however, declare the abandonment of the fruits of all actions as 'renunciation'. The sages say that all action is evil, and as such should be abandoned; while others declare that acts of sacrifice, charity and penances are not to be given up.

Good actions are those that are prescribed by the scriptures, such as charity, Yajnas, penances etc. The result of such action is the achievement of the enjoyment of the higher worlds of the Devas upto Sat-loka. For those who give up all action and are established in perfect inner inactivity, the life of ego ends and they attain to the still higher reality of the unmanifested Brahman i.e. Ishvara. However, there are others who perform special actions (Vikarma) for reaching the Highest Purusha; they undoubtedly attain to the Supreme. But they change not so much their outward life, as their entire attitude toward what they may be doing in their relation to the rest of the universe.\*

<sup>\*</sup> लौ लौ ज्ञान विज्ञान को, करे करम उत्तम । भसम करे ज्ञान अग्नि में, पंडित सबै जो करम ॥ करम सिद्धि सतलोक लों, अकरम ईव्वर ताय । विकर्म उत्तम करम की, सिद्धि उत्तम गति आय ॥

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणः न उपपद्यते । मोहात् तस्य परित्यागः तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥ दुखं इति एव यत् कर्म काय-क्लेश-भयात् त्यजेत् । सः कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं न एव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥ (१८/७-८)

Arjuna, the renunciation of obligatory actions is not proper; the abandonment of the same from delusion is declared to be Tamasic. And that abandonment is Rajasic, which is done from fear of bodily discomfort thinking that all action is painful. Such abandonment does not obtain the fruit of relinquishment.

A person who tries to renounce the obligatory actions encounters a greater difficulty inside his mind. For when he is left with no outer activity to engage his mind, his mind becomes a hot bed of unfulfilled desires. On the other hand, if he performs ritualistic actions he does not make any progress. Thus, by performance of the ritualistic actions there is no attainment of the Higher Reality, and by renouncing all kinds of obligatory actions one faces the inner turmoil and misses the opportunity of purification of the mind; while true knowledge can reveal itself only to the minds purified. Thus a man must first understand the two popular forms of spiritual activity, the Tamasic and the Rajasic. The so-called Sannyasis are mostly the doer of the Tamasic actions as they run away from the performance of their obtigatory duties on the one hand, and on the other fall into the trap of harbouring desires of greater lust and power. The Rajasic monks are the ritualists engaged in all types of outwardly show of worship from fear of household worries thinking that domestic life is painful.\*

<sup>\*</sup> न कर्म करे तो भ्रष्ट होय, सकाम बंघन रूप।

शुद्ध हृदय आतम करे, दरसे निज सरूप।। [अ०५]

विना करम शुद्ध ना होय, हृदये पारथ परमान।

शुद्ध हृदय दरसे सही, तत्व रूप जो ज्ञान।। [अ०८]

कार्यं इति एव यत् कर्मं नियतं क्रियते अर्जुन । संगंत्यक्त्वा फलं च एव सः त्यागःसात्त्विकः मतः।। न द्वेष्टि अकुशलं कर्म कुशले न अनुषज्जते । त्यागी सत्व समाविष्टः मेघावी छिन्नसंशयः ।। (१८/९-१०)

Arjuna, that renunciation is regarded as Sattvic in which all obligatory actions are done as duty, abandoning attachment and also their fruits. Such an abandoner, imbued with the quality of goodness and prudence and with all his doubts cut asunder, neither hates disagreeable action nor is attached to an agreeable action.

Men of wisdom execute all their obligatory duties without bothering for the reward they could bring any, for it is in their nature to do all good things and not to allow jealousy, anger, greed and other such impulses to disturb them. Such Sattvic persons soon discover within themselves a secret faculty to abandon their identification with the false. They wake up to a different plane of consciousness, not meant for the demoniac souls, and view things, situations and persons of different kinds with perfect equanimity. They are not elated when they find themselves on the "peaks" nor do they feel dejected when they discover themselves in the "pits" of life. Such Karmayogis are freed from the bonds of nature and realise their unity with God. All such actions that strengthen the feeling of separation from others, as selfishness does, fall off automatically.\*

(अ० ५)

करे करम फल रहित तें, हृदय शुद्ध होय तब।
 काम क्रोध गुन अहं इन्द्री, जीते विकार ये सब।।
 जेती विध पेहेले कही, ते जीव दसा पर जान।
 जीव ते विध ना करे, तौ लौ न उपजे ज्ञान।।
 जीव सुभाव छूटे जबे, घरे ईश्वर विषे बुद्ध।
 मोक्ष होय ईश्वर विषे, ज्ञान हृदय होय शुद्ध।।
 ते ज्ञान समदृष्टी गिने, द्विज चण्डाल समदृष्ट।
 हर्ष शोक सुख दुख सम, ते ज्ञानी है श्रेष्ट।।

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माणि अशेषतः। यः तु कर्म-फल-त्यागी सः त्यागी इति अभिधीयते ॥ अनिष्टं इष्टं मिश्रं च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम्। भवति अत्यागिनाम् प्रेत्य न तु सन्यासिनां क्वचित्॥ (१८/११-१२)

Since it is not possible for an embodied being to abandon all actions entirely, hence it is said that he who renounces the fruit of action, has truly renounced. Good, evil and mixed are the threefold fruit of action; but that accrues, after death, only to those who have not renounced the fruit, never to

one who has renounced the fruit.

Action, indeed, is the very nature of the eternal Jiva. A Jiva cannot exist without performing some action or the other. to think of ever escaping from action is a contradiction, possibility for a man. To speak of action or of the Jiva is one and the same thing. But, then, the moot question is: if action is an essential nature of Jiva, how could the Jiva be freed from the eternal process of action? The Gita-technique for the rescue of the soul from it, so beautifully elaborated, when briefly put would be: (i) the seeker first ceases to perform all kinds of the Vedic and other rituals prompted by the desires of worldly achievements and vain glory; (ii) a mind so discriminatory becomes open to the higher knowledge of the Supreme Reality for whose play this life of misery and sufferings is so created; (iii) on realising the illusory and playful nature of the world-process, the ego which is the base of all action melts. The melting ego loses interest in initiating any action and enjoying its fruit, because its own existence is in jeopardy. The body and the mind then function as a result of reflex action and all the activities happen determined by the past tendencies. After the potter has ceased to rotate the wheel, it still moves on for a while on account of the unspent force with the wheel. Likewise, an egoless man-of-perfection becomes an instrument through which the divine orchestra plays, singing the song of the Almighty.\*

करम कहत हैं ताहि को, अनादि जीव है जेह। आदि अविद्या सों बंध्यो, शुद्ध होय क्यों तेह ।। (अ० ५) सकाम करम अरु वेदान्त, ताकी सिद्धि ये आय। यार्थे पारथ छोड़ तू, निहकामी हो जाय ॥ हिरदे शुद्धि के अरथ को, फलरहित करे करम। ठीर ठीर भगवान ने, कह्यो निहकामी घरम ॥ (अ०३)

निराशीः यत-चित्तात्मा त्यक्त-सर्वपरिग्रहः । शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन न आप्नोति किल्बिषम्॥ बुद्धियुक्तः जहाति इह उभे सुकृत दुष्कृते । तस्मात् योगाय युज्यम्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्॥

Having no desires, with his mind and self controlled, giving up all possessions, performing merely bodily action, he incurs no sin. Having yoked his intelligence with the Divine, he casts away in this life both good and evil deeds. Therefore, exert yourself for this Karmayoga which also brings skill in action.

The ego draws its sustenance from the fruits of the future, and once the very hope of the fruits is abandoned the ego has to dissolve. From the body of such soul the actions merely flow and he incurs no sin. His soul rests in the universal self of Ishvara to whom all his actions are already dedicated. His body becomes like a flute, a kind of instrument for the divine will to express itself. However, this does not mean that such a person is established in laziness and slothfulness. On the contrary, the activities of such Karmayogi become skilled and he acquires an extraordinary dexterity in his work. For so long as the mind is obsessed by the hopes and the anxieties of the future, it is not able to concentrate fully on whatever it does; and to that extent its efficiency is mitigated and the quality of the work is marred. But as soon as the mind becomes without desire and without the distractions of the fruits accruing in the future, an enormous amount of energy otherwise dissipated is conserved and released to produce an excellent work and draw the greatest happiness of job-satisfaction.\*

<sup>\*</sup> करम करे निहकाम होय, फलरहित होय बुद्ध । ईश्वर विषे अरपन करे, होय अन्तस्करण शुद्ध ॥ (अ०३) फलरिहत उत्तम करम, करें तत्वदरसी । मगन रहे आनन्द विषे, चिद विलास विलसी ॥ निरआस रहे जगत से, राखे सेहेज सुभाव । तत्वदरसी गुन जीत के, राखे परम निज भाव ॥ (अ०६)

योगीनां अपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेन अन्तरात्मना । श्रद्धावान् भजते यः मां सः मे युक्ततमः मतः ॥ सर्वभूतिस्थितं यः मां भजित एकत्वं आस्थितः । सर्वथा वर्तामानः अपि सः योगी मिय वर्तते ॥ (६/४७, ३१)

But among all the Yogis, he who full of faith worships Me, with his inner self abiding in Me, is considered by Me to be the best of all Yogis. Such a Yogi established in One worships Me as dwelling in all beings, abides in Me, whatever be his mode of living.

Even becoming a successful Karmayogi is not enough, since attainment to the universality of Ishvara is not the highest goal. Therefore, Krishna having given a relative estimate of the different types of Yogis, now tells us who exactly is the best among all the Yogis like Sakam-Karmayogi, Jnana-yogi, Dhyan-yogi, Nishkam-Karmayogi and the Ananya Bhakta-yogi. For a higher soul, desirous of attaining to the Supreme Absolute, the essence of Yoga lies not merely in gratifying the curiosities by awakening the Kundalini, by having the "Darshan" of some deity, by realising the beauties of the universal self, or by achieving the tranquil state of even-mindedness, but rather by merging himself in the supreme experience of the Absolute. Therefore, having acquired the state of desireless action he constantly remembers Him, that is to say, his ego pours itself out in an act of surrendering his life to the ultimate principle of Reality. Then his devotion one day is able to invoke the blissful experience that lies beyond all His relative manifestation of secondary realities.\*

<sup>\*</sup> आतम व्यापक जगत में, परआतम इन पार।
करे जोग आतम से, परआतम को आधार।।
आतम परआतम विषे, शुद्ध योग होय जब।
गुन इन्द्री विकार सब, सेहेज मिटे जो तब।। (अ०५)
जो भक्त मेरो नित जो ग्रही, भजे भक्ति करि जेह।
मन ताको मेरे विषे, मोमें प्राप्ति तेह।। (अ०१४)

#### COMMENTS

The author of the Gita is not confident that everyone would be able to do the earlier discussed Yoga of meditation regularly and earnestly. For Yoga practice is a hard discipline suitable only to a few who could gain a perfect attunement with it. Therefore, another path of desireless action(Nishkam Karmayoga) is open to those whose energies and steadiness of mind are not properly tuned to the path of meditation or to the path of knowledge. Krishna arranges in a descending order of simplicity a tabulated list of all the paths, indicating the easiest of the whole lot in the end. "Knowledge is indeed better than mere practice of ritualistic Sadhana, better than knowledge is meditation; and better than meditation is Karmayoga, i. e. the renunciation of fruit of action." (12/12)

Man is essentially a bundle of desires. If left to themselves, the majority of men would demand in life only food to eat and luxuries to enjoy. And if these men were led to the path of meditation by restraining their senses, first many of them would shirk the path of Sadhana. Secondly, even if a few of them do accept to undergo the prescribed discipline of Yoga, it is possible that their sense-organs may come to feel an aversion for the sensuous objects in due course of time. But Krishna says (2/59) that their inclination for these sensuous objects becomes dormant in case of most of the meditators. As a result, though apparently the pleasure-giving objects may temporarily seem to turn away from him who is abstinent, the relish and deep taste for them, however, persits. It is ingrained in his mind and is very difficult to erase completely so long as the seeker has not experienced the truth.

Therefore, the safest and the simplest path is, for many a man, the path of Karmayoga. He is required to renounce not the action for his livelihood but only the fruit of all his actions and work with a spirit of dedication and service. Soon he would become tired of the desire-motivated activities, and with his subdued ego would come to exhaust his lust for passions.

At times certain actions of others seem to be quite attractive and easy to perform, but Krishna prevents us from performing them if they are not natural to us. We have to perform only actions that fall to us naturally. The actions that have to be artificially put together and that lead us to the whirlpool of other new actions, we have to keep away from them, however good they may be. For, their fruit cannot be renounced. If a person runs about on all sides impelled by the greed for action, how can he ever abandon the fruit, moreso when for love of the fruit he desires to perform the actions pertaining to other's profession? The attachment to fruit of such unnatural action will always cling to his mind.

To determine one's Sva-dharma, one should consider what is easily available and appropriate to our nature and situation and what duty has fallen to us. Everyone of us has in him something unique and his own-ness. In every individual there is something distinctively his own. If he understands this singularity and chooses to adopt a profession suitable to his temperament, not only will he excel in it and draw the maximum job-satisfaction but will also be able to give up the attraction of the fruit of such action, as the action would become so very natural and joyful to him. By constantly performing such actions with renunciation of fruit, his mind gets purer.

The housewife, the Griha-Laxmi tries to feed and please the family by keeping the kitchen clean and preparing pure, wholesome food. All these acts, if performed with noble thoughts and feelings of pleasing the Divine and His manifestations, become sacrificial action, i. e. Sva-dharma Yajna. It is easier for women to attain self-realisation through such Sva-dharma than for learned men who torture themselves in the fire of self-control. That is why, the king Janak, a profound scholar goes to a woman Sulabha to learn wisdom from her. The Mahabharat, in describing the conversation between Janak and Sulabha, indeed hints at the importance of Sva-dharma. The scholars may go on discussing whether women have the right to study the Vedas or not, but in the Mahabharat we see how Sulabha established in her Sva-dharma and total surrender to the Lord attains the divine wisdom hitherto not obtained by the king Janak even in the company of all the saints. Similar is the example

of the hunter Vyadh in the Mahabharat. An arrogant ascetic was advised by his Master to approach the hunter who killed animals and sold meat. The Brahmin ascetic wondered 'What can this butcher teach me?' Still he went to him for enlightenment. He simply told the Brahmin, 'Look, I cut the meat, wash it and display it for sale as an act of my family profession. I pour all my soul into this work and offer it to the Lord who has put me in this profession to serve my old parents.'

Those who simply perform actions without thus enjoying them are therefore not Karmayogis. All the egotism, the hatred and envy, the self-seeking and other distortions of commercialisation that most of us develop in the normal professional activities are the clear pointer to this. The job-satisfaction must stand united with the action; this application of joy of action, the Gita calls "Vikarma". The mother's caressing her child is a good example. A hand moves But who can describe the feelings up and down, and no more. arising in the hearts of the mother and the child too, from this common-place action. Without such joy, the action becomes a burden to us, a complete drudgery of our life. While nursing a sick man, if there is no joy and compassion, it would become disgusting to us and would cause no relief to the patient. Egotism too would show its head. We would entertain expectations like this. 'I serve him today for which he should admire and should likewise serve me at my need.

Therefore, the mere action is like powder, the joy in it is like fire that explodes its monotony. In the resulting explosion the desire for fruit or the anger in case of not obtaining it, is also destroyed. This results in 'inaction in action,' i. e. Akarma. The huge log of wood burns and becomes a handful of ashes, with which the saints smear out their bodies. Likewise, the fire of Vikarma reduces Karma to the ashes of Akarma. If we beat the child, he would not stand it. But when his mother beats him, he still goes back to her in her lap. The beating no longer looks like beating.

There is then the routine action which is outwardly our Svadharma; the job-satisfaction and the joy in it is the inward action 'Vikarma.' In Vikarma, the action of mind and the heart enters into Akarma, desirelessness grows within us, little by little. Like Patanjali speaks about 'Vitark', a special reasoning to arrive at the

conclusion in regard to truth, Krishna lays emphasis on 'Vikarma', an action with job-statisfaction.

Then actions begin to flow from us so unconsciously that the whole fabric of activity, from intensity to gentleness, from gentleness to subtlety, from subtlety to nothingness, finally ceases. A policeman has to shout for maintaining silence, another person merely lifts his finger and the people become quiet. A third person, simply by his presence, quietens the whole atmosphere. Likewise, a man of attachment has to exert himself to perform an action; whereas the action of a man of non-attachment becomes a gentle gesture and as the inward detachment grows, the effort in an action changes from gentleness to subtlety and form subtlety to nothingness. One, in one's anger, shouts aloud; another expresses it without opening his The Karmayogi thus makes not the slightest effort but mouth. performs infinite action. As inward silence grows and becomes absolute, in the end, his activity tends to zero and action towards infinity. First effort, then gentleness, then subtlety and at last nothingness thus the inner state of inactivity amid all his outwardly actions is reached of its own accord. But, now, infinite action takes place by itself.

This final stage of freedom also becomes the last stage of Sadhana when there is not even the thought that one is doing something. We can call this stage as amoral. The little child speaks the truth without knowing what falsehood is, hence he is amoral. The moralist, on the other hand, is acquainted with falsehood and yet speaks the truth. The state of a Karmayogi is also like the state of a child when there could be no falsehood at all. Hence there is no question of morality. In the state of realisation, there is no question of morality. There no forbidden thing can enter; the ear cannot hear what should not be heard; the eyes cannot see what should not be seen. This is a state in which there is no morality and the realised person sees the supreme heights of morality; because he becomes only the occasion through which the actions flow. Only that which should be done will get done through the hands. That which should be discarded will keep itself off. there is no need to avoid it.

In this way, the Karmayogi also reaches the same state of

awareness (Isthiti-prajna) to which the meditator attains through the path of meditation. When, through a constant practice of desireless action, the Karmayogi becomes aware, established in his own self he acts spontaneously in his day to day life without any prior plan in the mind, because now there exists no mind at all. A blind man may wonder as to how people with vision walk without stick in their hands to grope their way. Since he has no experience of seeing, he cannot understand it. He has always been groping and stumbling and even failing with his stick in his hand. He has been somehow managing. An aware Karmayogi does not have to manage; he is in a position to let go and everything fits together on its own accord. For deep down within him runs the current of being which knows more than what a mind with prejudices, opinions and ideologies can ever comprehend. An aware man participates in his daily routine of life totally and totality is not a discipline. All disciplines are partial. That is why a man who is much too disciplined seldom reaches the truth; he always carries the burden of doership. An aware man is not a doer in his awareness he simply acts according as is best for meeting the situation.

In absence of 'I' the energy hitherto used by the doer and the maker of effort is conserved and gathered to its highest point. In the pursuit of fruits and fulfilment of the motives there takes place an utter waste of energy, for the doership creates friction and therefore there is a waste of energy. In absence of doership there exists boundless energy without the user of that energy. It flows without contradiction, without any friction, and without any conflict. Hence it is boundless and endless. There are no frontiers to such energy. In the frictionless flow of such pure energy there is total self-abondonment; there is a spontaneous surrender to life without any reserve whatsoever. Pure energy acts through the field of innocence disarming the strongest resistance.

Man is suspicious of life, he feels that softness will cheat him if he is not alert. To protect himself from the hazards of life he builds up his psychological arsenal of doership. From this arises the personality formation, the weaving of mask of ego and the creating of one's scale of observation. But no sooner does the Karm-creating of one's scale of observation. But no sooner does the Karm-ayogi enter a field of innocence than he is disarmed realising the CC-O. Nanaji Deshmukh Library, BJP, Jammu. An eGangotri Initiative

absurdity of carrying arms in that field of innocence. A child creates such a field of innocence disarming even the most heavily armed personality. The range of the child's innocence is, however, limited; the innocence of the Karmayogi has immeasurable energy, but when the ego has been made inoperative there is born a silence of innocence pulsating with tremendous energy without the user of that energy. In face of this boundless energy there is the effortless dropping of the mask worn by the other, there is the spontaneous lifting of the veil of opposing ego, no matter how strong it is. Where is then the need to wear a mask of ego considered to be so essential for one's survival in the world amidst the struggle for existence?

For all of us life is beset with innumerable problems. If we start dealing with these problems namely the problem of livelihood, the problems of disease, old age and death, and the problem of security to our children, one by one then it will take perhaps the entire life-time to deal with them. And in the course of that time period, more problems will arise. The factor of time thus leads to a greater multiplication of problems. Is there a way to deal with all problems together and all at once?

Some psychological ways are suggested to meet a situation posing difficult problems. One must sleep over it and forget it for the time being and in that temporary forgetting a solution will come. Or one must occupy oneself with someting in which one is greatly interested so that the mind may get relief from the constant tension and be fresh enough to search out its solution. But, strictly speaking, these are the ways to postpone the solution of the problem. They do not provide us the master-key with which we could solve all our problems. That master-key lies in the state of desirelessness when the challenge of the problem which remains unexplained creates a state of tremendous energy and that energy is strong enough to disarm all opposition and solve all sorts of problematical situations. It functions with pure intelligence, and it functions immediately.

It is only when time collapses that this pure intelligence is born. All problems exist in time since time gives continuity to them. With the collapse of time, all problems wither away not one by one, but all together. We are talking of psychological time which in tackling the problem always skips over the present. Time is the

soil in which a problem takes root, since time gives continuity to a problem. How can the factor which gives continuity to a problem ever lead us to its solution? And since the moment of the present is where the psychological time is not, it is only there the problems can be solved. According to the Gita, the problems of life can be solved in the present but it must be psychological present of the abandonment of fruit of action. Time is obviously a movement of fruit of action, of desire and ambition from the past to its fulfilment in the future. When there is no interval between the challenge of problem and the response by way of anticipation of some favourable fruit then it is a condition of direct contact with the challenge; and it is only in such direct contact that total energy manifests itself in our being to meet the challenge. If the impact of the problem is interrupted by even the slightest desire or anxiety of some expected fruit there shall be only a partial understanding of the problem and. apartial release of energy to grapple it. From such partial understanding no total action can emerge; what emanates is only a reaction. And a reaction is the begetter of further reactions and problems, since it knows only continuity of time, never a completeness of timelessness.

When there are no defences, there is a totally different kind of action, an action which is not based on previously accumulated experience and knowledge. The desire for consistency arises from the feeling of security. Consistency is a mask by wearing which one hopes to be invulnerable against the impacts of life. To be consistent to a well-thought-out pattern of conduct gratifies the urge for achievement, and in its success there is comfort and security. That is why we cling to it with desperation. But we have seen that by becoming consistent all the time we do not solve all our problems. In fact consistency and creativity cannot go together. Where consistency is, there is no spontaniety. In the sphere of human relationship it is psychological memory which imposes consistency and predictability in one's conduct and behaviour. In such relationship action is born of memory. And to allow memory to play in the field of being is to kill the tender plant of being itself. But this does not mean that one has to become inconsistent deliberately and sow within oneself the seeds of self-contradiction. One has to rise above

the deliberate action whether it is consistent or inconsistent, because behind every deliberate action there is a motive to protect the mask of personality and ego.

The field of egoless innocence is a condition of inaction in the sense that it is a complete action bearing no residue, no mark on the Karmayogi's consiousness which has no demands, nothing to ask for in return and nothing to gain. From his innocence and desirelessness flows compassion and love and its impact unmasks everything. Here there is an act without the actor, the unconscious disarming and unmasking the resistance and conflicts of life in a way as suited best to everyone. The very attention he gives to a problem is the energy that solves the problem. When one is simply aware without the sense of doership and without the desire of fruit of any action, one enters into a state of attention which is total energy and that total energy is the highest form of intelligence.

Naturally that state of mind is the state of total silence. The silence which belongs to such a mind is completely different from the silence that is produced by the cessation of noise. What exactly takes place in that state cannot be put into words because what is said in words is not the fact. Ordinarily a disturbed and restless mind is so unnerved by the impact of psychological memory that it tries to get out of alignment with the factual memory by suspending the thought-process and silencing the mind in meditation. In such cases the thought-process does become suspended due to compulsive impact of the psychological situation, but a thick veil descends and a wall of estrangement arises and behind this wall the thinker frets and fumes. The thinker makes frantic efforts to get back to the old position or to a slightly altered position. Therefore the Karmayogi does not aim at the purgation of his mind only on its upper levels but mainly at its hidden depths; and this can happen only when he instead of making the mind dull by becoming aloof from the world rather observes his consciousness which is free of all desires and ambitions while eating, walking, gossipping, hating and loving the people. Silence put together by thought is stagnation, but silence that comes when the ego has understood its own beginning in the mirror of relationship, that silence is meditation of the Karmayogi in which the meditator or the doer is entirely absent and in

which there is a release of boundless energy.

The Karmayogi rises above the challenge-response phenomena. In the doer's mind, the reaction arises even before the challenge is fully perceived. There is no interval between the challenge and a reaction to it. The mind does not want to take a risk and so the challenge which is known only by inference is immediately covered up by a reaction. This reaction may be a worry, an abuse, a fight or any other defensive measure emerging from the psychological background. Many persons of non-violent cult, however, advise us to create a time interval between the two so that the challenge is met not with a reaction but with non-action. In this is a deliberate refusal to react. But a conscious refusal to react is only another form of reaction and hence strengthens the subtle form of doership in which its content is exactly like a reaction. For the Karmayogi who is without any hope of reward, the response is not deliberately kept in abeyance. Here there is a full awareness of a challenge without making the mind dull and yet there is no response. It is a case of not non-action but of inaction. He also does not escape from the challenges of life. When an intensity of activity and conflict has been brought into existence and even when the associative memory throws up numerous patterns and designs of reactive process, he observes with full intensity in the midst of all this and he finds that something of tremendous significance has happened within him. The challenge stands completely unmasked and presents a spectacle There can be no explanation of this unknown nor of the unknown. can there be any reaction to it.

In the beginning the mind may still be engaged in concocting some explanation of the challenge by ransacking the whole of its psychological memory. If the mind can somehow explain away the challenge, it will go on with a fresh lease of security and satisfied existence. In an attempt to explain the challenge a man alters his image and with this a new chapter of image-to-image relationship between challenge and response is re-established. In case of any delay in such alteration of the image due to factors unforeseen by the mind, there arises a disturbance that constantly forces the mind to reconstruct a modified image. The challenge-response phenomena thus always remains active in operation. But when the mind realises

that the known cannot know the unknown and that whatever the known does simply pushes the unknown further away, then face to face with the unknown form of the challenge the psychological memory receives a terrific jolt and experiences an impact of disintegration. And the challenge which remains unexplained creates a state of tremendous energy. In looking at the known this energy is caught up in distractions, for the known always distracts resulting in a waste of energy. But the unknown without the presence of the motives of the known can cause no distraction. The presence of the unknown challenge then creates a state of total attention with energy functioning at its highest.

This is a highly sensitive condition of the mind. There is no motive and no desire in such attention. The mind is in a state of search but without a seeker. It gives no name to a situation, it does not involve itself in comparison, judgment and evaluation. It is extraordinarily intelligent and deals with situation effectively without making it a problem in the context of psychological association. Since the mind has no place to go, has no answer to expect, nothing to wait for, there is an absolute stillness. Another factor is coming in and another movement is taking place into it. It is an understanding where there is knowledge of being, and not knowledge by ideation. It does not accumulate, it does not claim to know, it simply listens and looks.

If one were to ask such a Karmayogi about the purpose of his life, he would say that the purpose of life is to live in the joy of living. Living is its own purpose. Does love have a purpose apart from loving? Human relationship becomes a painful affair when one gets used to the other and becomes possessive. In possession is involved the urge and desire for continuity. To possess the other is to use the other for the continuity of one's pleasure. In this possession the mind is captured by an image or an idea from which all its boredom shoots forth. It is only when the mind is divested of all sense of possession that there is created in it space without an image or an idea. And it is only in this immensity of space that the inner being has unfettered freedom to move about, to grow and blossom forth into a flower which is the blissful life of love and compassion for all. He becomes a vital centre of revolution wherever he goes.

None can remain unchanged within the vicinity of his dynamic presence.

This is how the path of Karmayogi leads a Sadhak to selfrealisation. But, Krishna says that this much is not enough. seeker has to realise further the Divine Ocean in which his being waves as the blissful union. Mind is a process through which thoughts flow so rapidly that they give the illusion of the existence of a separate material body. The path of knowledge, the path of Yoga and the path of desireless action are the three chief methods described by the Gita to eliminate this thought-process, after which the self attains to realisation of its true being in the infinity of Blissconsciousness. Then the soul realises how the totality is moving and waving through her. Hence a further step is added by Krishna to the seekers of all the paths of self-realisation by recommending them to offer all their actions to the Supreme. And this path of surrender with complete devotion can be trodden upon even by a Yogi, a Jnani, or a Karmayogi right from the beginning of his Sadhana. This makes every action a special action, a Vikarma. And this path is so simple that even the most illiterate and the most down-trodden can follow it. One will reach when the time is ripe, one has simply to wait with one's surrendered ego. The whole knows what is to happen with him and when. He has merely to yoke his intelligence with the Divine and cast away the very sense of good and evil deeds. Whatever be his mode of living if he is established in God all the time, he would reach Him. Even if he is the vilest sinner, he would swiftly become a soul of righteousness after surrendering himself to God. That is why to Krishna among all the types of Sadhakas and Yogis, the best is one who endowed with full faith worships Him constantly, chants His names always and glorifies Him. For he is in constant union with him.

The Supreme is the personality of Godhead for the Karmayogi or the Jnanayogi. A person like Arjuna therefore acting for Krishna or in Krishna-consciousness, without attachment to the result of the work, is certainly making progress toward the supreme goal of life. Arjuna is told that he should fight for the interest of Krishna because Krishna wanted the establishment of righteousness through the warrior Arjuna. King like Janak and even all the ten Masters (Gurus) of the Sikha sect were self-realised souls, consequently they

had no obligation to perform the duties expected of them. Nevertheless they performed all prescribed activities just to set example for the other people. They fought to teach people that the establishment of righteousness and uprooting the unrighteousness are the tasks of Krishna, as such a devotee of Krishna cannotshirk the responsibility conducive to the development of Krishna-consciousness.

Two persons, one in Krishna-consciousness and the other in material-consciousness may appear to be working on the same level but there is a wide gulf of difference in their being. The person in material consciousness is convinced by false ego that he is the doer of everything. He forgets that the mechanism of the body and mind is produced by material nature, the Apara Parkriti, which is being completely controlled by the Supreme Lord through His agency of cosmic being Ishvara. The ego-centred person has no awareness that ultimately he is under the control of the Supreme. Hence he takes all credit for doing things in the world. On the other hand, the Karmayogi fully aware in Krishna-conciousness feels all the time that he is engaged in the service of Krishna. He knows that his real identity as part and parcel of the Supreme is different and that somehow he is placed in the material conception of life for the transcendental sport of the Lord. It is only such devotion that renders all his actions as special actions (Vikarma), filling them with a unique kind of joy of job-satisfaction in offering them to the one from whom they originate.

# Chapter VI

# Supreme Path of Exclusive Devotion

The term "Ananya" (no-otherness) is explained by some as to indicate the non-duality of devotee with the Deity. But the term means more than that. Krishna prohibits the devotee, at first, from indulging in the worship of multi-deities, since by worshipping them he would never come to His Abode, and then further counsels him to devote his undivided attention to one Purushottam instead of Kshara or Akshara Purusha. Hence the term "Ananya" merits a very careful analysis and closer understanding. Moreover, "Ananya" is corroborated by another very powerful and explicit term "Avyabhicharini-bhakti" which can have no far-fetched meaning except that the Bhakti must be aimed exclusively at One Supreme Purusha with an unprostituting mind.

Secondly, there are texts in the Padma Purana in which Lord Shiva renders the meaning of "Ananya" crystal-clear, leaving no room for any further doubt or different interpretation:

"In Ananya Sadhana the devotee totally surrenders himself for ever to none other but one. For him there is no other path, no other destination and no other purpose of his life. He worships no other Devas, nor offers salutations, nor does he remember any other god. He does not see nor sing the songs of the glory of the other deities, nor does he speak low of them."\*

Mahavir and Buddha went so far so as to take away the distracting concept of even God from their followers, little knowing that a day would come when they would be worshipping their

<sup>\*</sup> अनन्य शरणो नित्यं तथैव अनन्य साघनः। अनन्य साघनार्थं त्वात्स्यात् अनन्य प्रयोजनः॥ न अन्यंच पूजयेत देवं नमैत स्मरेन्न च। न च पश्येन्न गायेच्च न एव निन्देत् कदाचन॥ (पद्म पुराण, पाताल खंड, ८२/३३—३४)

statues. This has happened to all the religions these days. The true spirit of love is lost sight of and the false substitutes are caught hold of. Then one goes on worshipping these false substitutes and nothing happens.

These substitutes, Krishna would say, are your own toys, you are the creator of your gods, holy books and statues, and you pray before them thinking something is going to happen. What can happen with all such make-beliefs and superstitions? One statue is not doing it, so create two. This is the arithmetic of an ignorant mind. In the Hindus there is said to be thirty-three crores of gods, but the Gita would say, these thirty three crores of gods and their statues are of no help. One is enough, thirty-three crores will simply cause chaos in your mind. Hence the significance of the exclusive devotion, Ananya-bhakti to One Supreme.

## (V) Path of Exclusive Devotion

पुरुषः सः परः पार्थं भक्तया लभ्यः तु अनन्यया।
यस्य अन्तः स्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वे ईदं ततम् ॥
वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपः सु च एव दानेषु यत् पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।
अत्येति तत् सर्वे इदं विदित्वा योगी परं स्थानं उपैति च आद्यम्॥
(८/२२, २८)

Arjuna, that Supreme Person in whom all existences abide and by whom all this is pervaded, is attainable only by Exclusive Devotion. The Yogi, knowing this secret, transcends all the rewards assigned to the study of the Vedas, sacrifices, austerities and charities, and attains to the supreme and primeval state.

The path of the Tattvadarshi is different from the paths commonly followed by men given to the practice of austerities, Yoga of meditation, ritualistic sacrifices of the Veda and the like. The path particularly prescribed for him is the path of exclusive devotion, adhering to which he sees the entire phenomenal dance of creation in the screen-substratum of the Supreme Divinity whose presence pervades every phase of the creation. In most of the meditational practices prescribed by the ancient Yoga and in the sudden transformation of the path of knowledge prescribed by the Sankhya, there is a great deal of emphasis on maintaining a ceaseless strugglle against the distractions of the mind. But the path of exclusive devotion is a field of surrender in which the supreme Godhead becomes a vast movement of an infinity, an ineffable joy and an intimate presence with whom we have to come to know of our intricate kinship of Bhogta and Bhogya, i. e. the solidified Bliss and the fluid of bliss-consciousness.\*

<sup>\*</sup> जो जगत विषे मोकों लखे, अरु जगत मेरे माहें।
हूँ ईश्वर सबको आदि दे, सो जोगी पोहोचे ताहें।।
ये जोगी तत्वदरसी कहे, स्वयं सिद्ध जोग सार ।
मतो अगाध ये जोगी को, सबे ज्ञान को पार ।।
करम जोग तप जग्य अष्टांग, जो सांख्य जोग अरु ज्ञान।
सब ही जोग के परे, तत्वदरसी जोग जान।। (अ०९)

त्रैगुण्य- विषयाः वेदाः निस्त्रैगुण्यः भव अर्जुन । निर्द्धन्द्वः नित्य- सत्त्वस्थः निर्योगक्षेमः आत्मवान् ॥ न अहं वेदैः न तपसा न दानेन न च इज्यया । शक्यः एवंविधः दृष्टुं दृष्टवान् असि मां यथा ॥ (२/४४, ११/५३)

O Arjuna, the Vedas deal with the three attributes of Prakriti, hence be thou above these attributes; rise above the pairs of opposites; free thyself from all thoughts of acquisition and preservation; and be established in the eternal self. For neither by study of the Vedas nor by penance nor by charity nor by sacrifices in the fire can I be seen in this cosmic form as you have seen Me on account of your love.

Whatever meritorious results are promised in the scriptures to accrue from the study of the Vedas, viz. performance of sacrifices, practices of penance and charities, the devotee of the Supreme gains them all. And there are many materialistic profits which are said to result from the Vedic rituals and are not to be sought after. Therefore he has no more use for the Vedas which in fact do not enlighten us of anything beyond the triple stuff of which the universe is made. Hence the Tattvadarshi has to rise above the triad of the Gunas of Prakriti and the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, success and failure, joy and sorrow etc.\*

<sup>\*</sup> त्रगुण विषे छोड़ वेद को, निहस्त्रिगुण होय तित। होय निरद्धन्द्व आतम जोग कर, परमात्मा सो चित। (अ०४) फलित बानी मो वेद की, ते पढ़ते जो कोय। रते वेद के वाद में, महा अभिमानी होय। दान ब्रत तीरथ त्रपन, जनम करम करे जेह। भोग करे स्वर्ग लोक लो, अन्त परे जो तेह।। (अ०३) चित शुद्ध होय तबे, करे करम फल नास। जीते इन्द्री निज ध्यान कर, सो जोगी जोग सन्यास। (अ०९)

भक्तया तु अनन्यया शक्यः अहं एवंविधः अर्जुन । ज्ञातुं दृष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥ मां च यः अव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवतें । सः गुणान् समतीत्य एतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ (११/५४; १४/२६)

But by exclusive devotion, however, O Arjuna, I can be thus known, truly seen and even entered into. He who serves Me with exclusive Un-prostituting devotion of love, rises above the three attributes and becomes fit for attaining Brahman.

There is a clear warning here for Arjuna not to prostitute with his devotion to One Supreme. Attempts at such unprostituting devotion can integrate the personality a million times more easily and quickly than by all the other methods put together. This is the highest secret of the Sadhana. When the intellectual discernment of the discriminating Tattvadarshi is saturated with the stream of devotional consciousness, the devotee of wisdom comes to know the Supreme. He truly sees Him everywhere so much so that His presence grows upon him and envelops him till he is filled with it all around him. The one who eternally becomes the many in His eternal sport, the many who in their apparent division are essentially one— this becomes evident to him.\*

सकल वासना भसम कर, घरे ध्यान होय घीर।
 ज्यों बिना पवन दीपक रहे, यों राखे मन घीर।। (अ०९)

सुनो पार्थं अब ज्ञान गुह्य, दैवत मेरो देख। जो भक्ति सहित ज्ञान लखे, सो जाने मोय विशेष।। (अ० ११)

अपि चेत् सुदुराचारः भजते मां अनन्यभाक् । साधुः एव सः मन्तव्यः सम्यक् व्यवसितः हि सः ॥ क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शस्वत् शांति निगच्छति । कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणस्यति ॥

(9/30-38)

Even if the vilest sinner worships Me with exclusive devotion, he must be reckoned as righteous for he has rightly resolved. Swiftly does he become a soul of righteousness and obtain lasting peace. Know it for certain, Arjuna, that My devotee perishes never.

Sin is a wrong tendency in the mind and the feelings of condemnation towards women and persons of inferior caste are the machinations of a few handful scholars of vested interests. To such victims of congenital mal-adjustments the path of spiritual readjustment is opened up by Krishna. If they are not permitted to touch the Vedas, Krishna says that there is nothing for them in those ritualistic scriptures and hence they need not bother to know them. The path of exclusive devotion is a path of such a great potency that even the vilest sinners and the lowest untouchables can swiftly become the dynamic saint and may in good time gain glimpses of the supreme experiences. There is no surprise for a Brahmin to have reached this stage in view of the tremendous opportunities favouring him in this direction; the greatest surprise lies, indeed, in the swift transformation of a condemned personality from the moment of his right resolve. Right resolve is more important than mere routine ways of devotion. The firm decision of a resolute Sadhak has all the enthusiasm, cheerfulness, and heroic dynamism needed for sure success on the path of Sadhana.\*

<sup>\*</sup> जो आवे सरन मेरे किबहूँ, पाप जौन है जैह । वैस्य सूद्र क्षत्री आदि ये, पावे परमगित तेह ।। जो ब्राह्मन पुनि आवे सरन, ताको अचरज कोय । भजे मोको सब विध सों, उत्तम कहिए सोय ।। (अ० १०)

न मां दुष्कृतिनः मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः । मायया अपहृत-ज्ञानाः आसुरं भावं आश्रिताः ॥ चतुर्विधाः भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनः अर्जुन । आर्तः जिज्ञासुः अर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ् ॥

(6/24-25)

The evil-doers, the deluded, the lowest of men, do not worship Me. They whose minds are carried away by illusion follow the ways of the wretched men. Arjuna, the virtuous ones who worship Me are of four kinds: the man in distress, the seeker for knowledge, the seeker for wealth, and the man of wisdom.

But the majority of mankind are of a melancholy brood famished cattle, who know only just how to plod on their set path. Their thinking is deluded by the triad Gunas of Maya and, as such, they are incapable of seeing anything beyond the mighty illusive forms of Maya. Even when persons decide to take up the path of Bhakti, their devotion towards Me is coloured by several factors of short-sightedness. Primarily men remember Me for gaining wealth or redress from any distress of their life. A few try to know the nature of My being but merely to appease their idle intellectual curiosity. But there is one more class of seekers, the devotees of wisdom who know that love is bigger than them. They cannot possess it just as they can possess money and other things. Love is so great a thing that they know that they can only be possessed by it. It is a field of surrender in which they allow themselves to be possessed by something greater than them and they therefore demand nothing, expect nothing, carry with them only themselves as their offering in the enactment of the Sporter.\*

मम माया है त्रगुनमयी, है दुरघट अपार।
 मोहित माया करे, मोको लखे न लगार।।
 है भक्त चार प्रकार के, भजें मोय कर इष्ट।
 आरत अरथार्थी जिज्ञासु, ज्ञानी यामें श्रेष्ठ।। (अ०१०)

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्तः एकभक्तिः विशिष्यते । श्रियः हि ज्ञानिनः अत्यर्थं अहं सः च मम श्रियः ॥ उदाराः सर्व एव एते ज्ञानी तु आत्मा एव मे मतम् । आस्थितः स हि युक्त-आत्मा मां एव अनुक्तमां गतिम् ॥ (७/१७-१८)

Of these the best is the man of wisdom, who is in constant union with Me and whose devotion is single-minded. I am exceedingly dear to him and he is supremely dear to me. Though all others are good, but the man of wisdom I consider to be My own self; for he regards Me to be the highest goal, is firmly established in Me and merges his mind completely in me.

Arjuna was instrumental for Krishna to deliver His message to these higher souls. The secret message is supreme and the mystery is supreme and the revelation of the secret is also obtained to the souls supreme. The integrated heart of total devotion, which is not deflected by any other aspirations in one's life, represents the best, because Purushottam remains the only reality for him to revel, and overwhelms his discriminating mind, selfless ego and universalised self. If the Supreme is the bliss aspect of the Absolute Reality, the souls are its other aspect of the bliss-consciousness. It is in this double realisation, it is in this union of the two sides of an ineffable truth that the self-consecrated devotee of wisdom lives and acts. And in that unifying realisation lies the crowning portion of the highest experience. The inner spiritual state to which this experience takes him is above all that exists in the cosmic Virat of Kshara Purusha as well as in the field of universal reality of Akshara—yet it is comprehensive of all things in Kshara and Akshara, with a complete knowledge of their graded schedule of existence.\*

<sup>\*</sup> अब कहों सनातन जोग जे, ज्ञान सिहत विज्ञान ।
रहस्य उत्तम भगत को, भगत उत्तम निरवान ॥
लोक वेद वरण घरम तें, हैं वितरागी जेह ।
रहस्य भगत जाकी उत्तम, तत्वदरसी हैं तेह ॥ (अ० ६)
तत्वदरसी को ज्ञान जो, लखे तत्व दरसी ।
उत्तम भक्ति हैं याहि की, चिद विलास विलसी ॥ (अ० ११)

तमे व शरणं गच्छ सर्व भावेन भारत । तत् प्रसादात् परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥ सर्व धर्मान् परित्यज्य मां एकं शरणं व्रज । अहं त्वां सर्व पापेभ्यः मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

 $(8 = | \xi \xi, \xi \xi)$ 

Therefore, Arjuna, seek refuge in Me alone with all your being; by My grace shall you obtain the eternal abode of supreme peace. Abandoning all duties and dharmas, take refuge in Me alone. I shall release you from all sins; grieve not.

What the devotees of Purushottam have to do is to abandon all Dharmas and consecrate themselves to the supreme Godhead; that is all that they need to do. And then all that the various systems of Yogas can do will be done and even more; and it will be done in a greater seeing way, with a profounder knowledge and truth than any human teacher, saint or sage can give one about Him. This is the biggest promise ever made by anyone, in so unequivocal terms. The ego and the false sense of independence is the cause of all our woes of life. Now the call of Krishna is to live and act with our restless mind resting in self-dedicated surrender to the Absolute, so that, thereafter, external circumstances cease to toss and crush our individuality. Even otherwise all the problems of one whose refreshing memory rejoices in the present and whose such brilliant intellect probes into the affairs of life, wither away and carpet his path to final merging in the Infinity of the Supreme.\*

<sup>\*</sup> सबे घरम को त्याग कर, शरन मेरे आव । होय प्राप्त मेरे विषे, मिटे दोष सुभाव ।। (अ०१८)

शुद्ध अन्तःकरण को, करम करे निरघार। ईश्वर विषे अरपन करे, अलप ही होय अपार ॥ (अ०३)

### COMMENTS

The typical example of the beast of burden is the donkey. This humble beast is made to work very hard by his master. The donkey, surprisingly, does not know for whom acutally he works so hard day and night. He remains satisfied by filling his stomach with a bundle of grass. He sleeps for a while, but always under the fear of being beaten by his master. Likewise, the worldly souls work very hard day and night and enjoy only a fraction of the fruit of labour. At times, they spend sleepless nights, mealless days and suffer from the most gruesome diseases like leprosy, cancer and V. D., yet unmindful of all the miseries they untiringly continue toiling for the benefit of illusive masters and never care to know about the Supreme Master who can bless their lives of misery with His infinite blissful existence.

But a devotee knows that everything belongs to Krishna and hence he does not claim proprietorship over anything. He is not in need of anything because the Lord fulfils all his material necessities. He is like the ocean always full in himself. Desires may come to him like the waters of the rivers that flow into the ocean without disturbing him. Desirelessness of a devotee becomes Krishnaconsciousness.

Every creature is engaged in rendering service to another creature. Animals serve human beings as servants serve their master. Among human beings the poor serve the rich, the rich serve the politicians and the Govt. officers and the latter serve one another. Thus service is the constant companion of the living being. The Bhaktayogi, however, comes to realize that this hierarchy of servitude has no end until we understand our relationship with the Absolute who is the Supreme Divinity participating in His oceanlike eternal enjoyment through the waters of the rivulets. Therefore it is not possible for any entity to shake off the constant humiliation of sevitude to one another until one becomes inseparate with the Infinite ocean of bliss and understands one's transcendental kinship with Him. We cannot attain to real happiness otherwise, just as

no part of the organic body can be happy without co-operating with the stomach or the vital force of the organic unity of the body as a whole.

Both the consciousness of the Supreme whole and that of the higher souls are transcendental. The consciousness of the Supreme is not contaminated, while the consciousness of the Jiva is contaminated with the feelings of smallness and servitude. This is called false ego imprisoned in the body. There is the affinity of being affected by the inferior modes. The Gita talks of one's becoming free from the bodily conception of life and being situated in pure consciousness. All the instructions of the Gita are intended to awaken this pure consciousness, and therefore we find at the last stage of the Gita's instructions that Krishna is asking Arjuna whether he is now established in purified consciousness. Purified consciousness means dovetailing our actions to the will of the Supreme Consciousness, participating in the rise and fall of the oceanic waves.

Whenever surrender is contemplated one begins to think that 'If I surrender, I will not be an individual.' This is not correct. For in surrender one gives up one's ego and not one's own self. Ego is a false individuality and if one surrenders the false, one is bound to explode into the real. This is the beauty of surrender. You cannot surrender the Self; that is impossible since it is an eternal existence. One can surrender only that which has been falsely put into you from outside. A child is born with a self; but not with an ego. Ego is a social construct, a later growth. Ego cannot exist without relationship. The Self can exist, but the ego cannot exist in itself. It is a bye-product of being related to others. The ego exists between I and you. It is a relata.

As soon as a child is born, ego becomes a covering on the Self and then it goes on growing because the society needs you as an ego, not as a Self. Education, culture, civilization all these strengthen the ego so much so that we begin to function from the the ego, not from our Self. Our Self goes into the unconscious and inner darkness and the false construct of ego becomes the centre of all our activity. It wants to assert over everyone and desires respect and love from everywhere.

Therefore three things are to be remembered. One cannot be in silence so long as one is living a life of ego, because then we are in a crowd of relation. Secondly we can never find true happiness in ego, as happiness lies only in the Self. So if we are established in ego, our happiness will always be in future—never attained, always to be attained. And, thirdly, our life of ego will always be in fear of death. Ego is a construct; it is always afraid of death amid all its activities of love, hatred and family expansion. It is only the Self that has never known death. Fear and freedom cannot exist together. It is because of fear and insecurity that we have created all our bondages of egotistic activities.

Hence, no other method of meditation or ritualistic worship of the deity is needed, no technique of Yoga is required for one who follows the path of surrender. Just leave everything to the Supreme and you can relax. Simply be loose and natural and let things be. There is even no need of any search or inquiry. Because by any amount of enquiry or search you are not going to make much progress. You may in all probability strengthen your ego of false knowledge. And all knowledge acquired in the dream is of illusory nature. By collecting it you remain in the world-त्रेगण्य विषया वेदा. Therefore give up your hope of ever breaking your worldly dream with the help of this worldly knowledge. At the most it can show you how finite and limited its nature is. Nothing more it could tell you. Hence on the path of exclusive devotion to the Supreme. nothing in particular is to be done. All that could be done you have done. Now you simply become loose and natural and forget everything about Yoga, Sadhana, control, seeking, searching and rituals of worship. Krishna says, forget everything about them. Now having totally surrendered to Him, if you do something then the ego will strengthen. Your own efforts would make you feel independent.

On the path of Yoga this is what happens. The Yogi gradually awakens himself by concentrating within his inner bodies one by one until he reaches his fifth inner body, i.e. the Vijnanmaya Kosha. Upto the fifth the ego is very significant. Hence transcending it becomes very difficult in the gradual process because it gets strengthened with the achievement of control over all the lower astral

bodies of the self. This is the difficulty with many of the Yogis like Vishvamitra and Durvasha. In the Sabeej-Samadhi, the seed of ego is the most powerful thing of the universe. If it explodes, it can be annihilated; but if it does not, it can hold back the further progress of the Yogi. And the Yogi may also feel very exalted at this stage of his consciousness. He becomes all powerful Ishvara, the Lord of the Universe. Many devotees of the path of meditation terminate their journey of Sadhana at this stage and thus never transcend the perishable Kshara. But if the Sadhak follows the second way of the direct process of surrender, the realisation is quicker and sudden and awakens him in his real self. This direct sudden path is to Navrang Swami the most effective path for the God-loving souls to awaken.

Stalingrad is a great city of the communist Russia. Its former name was Petrograd after the name of the emperor Peter the Great, who once desired to have his palace made at a particular hilly place. On the hill there was a very huge stone to be lifted, but its lifting became a problem to the engineers of his time. Many engineers thought over the problem and found that it would amount to heavy expenditure perhaps lakhs of roubles, if it had to be cut by labourers in small pieces for removing it. Incidentally a farmer also saw it and offered his services for a very low cost saying that the removal of the rock would not cost much and in a few thousand roubles he would be able to do it. The expert engineers laughed at his suggestion. However, the emperor agreed to the farmer's proposal and gave him the job of removing the rock and levelling the ground. The farmer started doing his job not by cutting or lifting the rocks, but by digging the ground under all the rocks of the area. Soon he was able to place not only that particular big rock but all the neighbouring rocks in the deep pits, thus completely levelling the entire ground as desired by the emperor. The engineers were taken aback to see this simple trick of the farmer. The emperor was so overjoyed to see his performance that he engraved the name of that farmer in his palace as a token of appreciation.

The path of surrender is also of this simple nature. The task which may be so difficult and even impossible to many by other ways becomes easy for a devotee following the path

of surrender. We have not to suppress our desires or control the worldly thoughts by warding them off again and again, but merely to let the natural activities of our mind be pervaded by the presence of the Divine. Once we have thrown ourselves completely into the abyss of divine will, all the odds of our life are evened out in the natural course. In the Lord's dream of creation, why to torture oneself in the fire of self control; just surrender promptly and find freedom. If the illness can be cured by milk and sugar, why drink the bitter drugs of the physicians. Make the senses, the instruments of pleasant perception. Instead of closing the eyes, plugging the ears against the outside noises and staying away from the tasty food, Krishna would say, it is very easy to listen to the stories of His life, it is quite pleasant to utter His name and talk about His Lilas. The senses are not enemies. They can be our best friends. Enjoy tasty dishes as "Prasad" after offering to Him who has given you the sense of taste as well as the tasty food.

In fact, Krishna says, "Arjuna, make yourself an occasion, I am the real doer of all action." How does one make oneself an occasion in God's play? How does one become a flute in Krishna's hands? To be a flute means to become hollow. But we are stuffed full with our own preferences and resolves. How then can music come through us. Our tone is gruff. We are filled with our egos, the sense of 'I'. I must empty myself of ego. Only when I become fully free, altogether empty, will the Lord breathe through me and my life would be like if He put me to His lips and drew sweet notes through me.

In Sadhana often the question of time arises. For this it is said that the less the hurry, the earlier the results. The state of impatience and the feelings of excitements delay the realisation. This very moment it can happen because it is not a question of time, it is a question of the quality of the mind. Once a monk, while he was passing through a forest, suddenly saw that he was being followed by a tiger. He ran and came near a precipice where he hang from the thin branch of a tree. There he looked downwards where it was going to be a very deep fall in the valley as soon as the branch of the tree breaks. He looked round and realised that everything was fixed. Whichever way he would go, death was waiting. He laughed

discovering that when death was so certain, there was nothing more to worry. Only in uncertainty was there worry. If death had become a destiny, he thought how to enjoy these last few moments. He perceived that by the side of the branch there were some strawberries, so he picked a few and ate them. They were the best eatables of his life which he enjoyed towards the end of his life and, it was said, that he became enlightened in that moment. Thus an infinite patience and total acceptance of the odds of life are needed. Not hankering after results gives us much depth; and hurry makes us shallow. Hurry makes us interested not in the present moment, but in what is going to happen the next. Interested in result, we move ahead of ourself. We try to run very far but we do not reach anywhere, because the goal to be reached is just here. We have to drop into it, not to reach anywhere. A Zen Master, Hui-Hui, has said "Seek and you will lose, do not seek and you can get it immediately. Stop, and it is here. Run and it is nowhere."

The eminent English psychiatrist P. D. Laing says that no madness can last for more than 3 to 4 weeks, if it is not interfered with. By interfering with it the process is prolonged. Mostly people lose patience and interfere with it thereby causing a damage.

Once when a disciple brought dirty water to Buddha, he threw it and asked him to bring water again from the same river. The disciple Ananda did not like the idea of going to the same river and getting the dirty water again. Anyhow, obeying Buddha when he reached there, he found the water completely clean and the dirt fully settled down. Bringing the water he saluted Buddha and said, "Your ways of teaching patience are miraculous. Everywhere patience is needed, since nothing is permanent and lasting."

The path of surrender is, nodoubt, the easiest and the most pleasant, but it also requires infinite patience. Indeed, this is the state for which the devotees often say, "Sitting quietly, doing nothing, spring comes and the grass grows by itself." Beyond this, words cannot explain. One has to offer to Him and then wait for the realization of the Truth. It comes on His will, just like the grass grows by itself. Then the last phase of the ego is transcended, and infact there is no one who transcends it, because if someone is there to transcend it, again the ego is there. So one cannot do anything about it. That is why, the Gita simply ends here. There is nothing more to say.

### GLOSSARY

Acharya — a spiritual teacher
Adıti — mother of demi-gods
Aditya — demigod sons of Aditi

Adhibhuta — physical nature

Adhi-daivat – universal form of the cosmic being

Ishvara

Adhi-yajna — Supreme Lord

Adhyatma – universal consciousness of Akshara

Advait — non-dual

Agni – demigod controlling fire

Ajna-chakra — third eye between the eye-brows

Akshara Brahman — changeless substratum, Sat-Purusha

Akarma — action for which one suffers no

reaction

Arjuna — friend of Lord Krishna

Ananya — exclusive
Ananda — bliss

Apana — vital energy sustaining the lower

part of the body.

Apara — material
Asat — temporary
Atma — self

Aum — first sound of creation

Avatar — incarnation of the Lord

Avidya — ignorance Avyakta — unmanifested

Avyabhicharini — faithful, not prostituting

Bhagavata — a holy book describing the life of

Lord Krishna

Bhagavan — divine
Bhakta — devotee
Bhakti — devotion

Bhakti-yoga — path of devotion

Brahma — the first created god

Brahma-loka — abode of god Brahma or Saguna
Brahman

Brahman — Supreme Being

Chandala — lowest class of people, dog-eaters

Chit — consciousness
Darshan — visitation
Devas — gods

Devyana — path of gods
Dharma — righteousness

Gandharvas — celestial singers of heaven

Goloka-dham - abode of Krishna in cosmic

Guna creation — quality

Guru — spiritual master
Indra — king of heaven
Ishvara

- cosmic being controlling the

cosmos

Ishvari-sristi — godly souls descending into the

world

Janak — a self-realized king and father-in-

law of Lord Ram

Jiva — individual self

Jiva-sristi — worldly souls, permanent actors

Jnana – knowledge

Jnana-yoga — path of knowledge

Jnani -- enlightened

Kamdhenu — a cow of heaven by having which

one can fulfil any desire

Kala - form, mode

Karma, — action

Karma-yoga — path of action

Krishna — supreme Lord who incarnates in

perishable creation

Kshetra — field of activity, the body for the

soul.

Kshetrajna — knower of the field of activity, i.e.,

the soul

Kurukshetra	-	battleground of Mahabharat
Kusa	_	a kind of grass used as a seat by meditators
Laxmi	_	goddess of wealth, consort of god Vishnu
Lila	_	sport, pastime, disport of God
Loka	_	plane, divine worlds
Mahabharat	_	great Indian epic describing the
Mahat	-	first-born principle of intelligence in creation
Maha-vishnu	_	cosmic being, the chief of all gods
Manu	_	first father of mankind
Mantra	_	potent words for invoking the
		higher deity
Maya	_	power of God creating illusive
		appearance of the world
Moksha	_	liberation
Nishkam	_	desireless
Narayana	-	manifestation of Akshara Brahman
		in the cosmic creation, Kshara-
		Purusha
Nirguna	-	attributeless
Nirakar	_	formless
Nirvana	-	void
Paramatma	_	Supreme Absolute
Para-Brahman	-	Supreme Absolute
Param-Dham	_	Abode of the Supreme Absolute
Para-Prakriti	_	conscious form of nature creating
		the worldly souls
Pitra-loka	_	plane of the departed ancestors, astral world
Pitrayana	_	path of ancestors
Prajapati	_	progenitor
Prajnanam-anandam		knowledge and bliss-filled
Prakriti	-	nature
Prana	_	vital energy sustaining the body

Pranava — Aum, the first sound of creation

Prasad — breath-control

Pratvahar — any eatable offered to God

Preta — withdrawal of mind from objects

Puranas – discarnate spirit

- old books of the Hindus describing

the seer's experiences about gods

Purusha — person

Rajas - Supreme Person, the Absolute

Rahasvam — quality of dynamism

Sat secret

Sat-chit-anand existence, being

Being-consciousness-bliss, the

Supreme Absolute

Sadhah — spiritual practice

seeker, devotee, one devoted to

the search of the ultimate Reality

Saguna — possessing attributes

Sakam – selfish

Samadhan — clearing of doubts

Samadhi - trance, absorption in pure con-

sciousness

Sabeej — with seed of mind

Sankhya – Kapil's Yoga process: discernment

by analysis and understanding

Sankalpa – desire, will

Sannyasa — the renounced order of life of a

monk

Sannyasi – monk

Sattva — quality of purity
Shankaracharya — a great self-realised
Shastras — holy scriptures

Shakta — worshippers of the female form of

deity

Shiva — a god, incharge of destruction of

the world.

Soma	-	a kind of juicy drink used at the		
a		time of sacrifice		
Shukadeva	-	a sage, the author of the holy book		
		Bhagavata		
Svarga-loka	-	heaven		
Svabhava	_	aptitude		
Svadharma	_	one's own profession		
Tamas	_	quality of inertia and indolence		
Tattvadarshi	_	higher souls of Supreme abode		
		descending into the world, souls		
		desirous of meeting the Absolute		
Upanishad	_	philosophical portion of the Vedas		
Uttam Purusha	_	Supreme Absolute		
Uttamam	_	greatest, best		
Upasana	-	worship		
Vairagya	_	spirit of renunciation		
Vaikuntha		abode of Vishnu (Narayana)		
Vasanas	_	unfulfilled longings, drives of the		
		unconscious		
Vasudeva	_	incarnation of Goloka Krishna as		
		son of Vasu		
Vedas	_	ancient holy books of rituals		
Virat	_	cosmos, the vast body of cosmic		
		being the tast body of cosmic		
Vijnana	_	science, specialised knowledge		
Vibhuti	_	divine glory		
Vikarma	_	special action with job satisfaction		
Vishnu	_	deity controlling each world		
Vivasvan	_	sun-god to whom knowledge of		
		Gita was given earlier		
Vivek	_	sense of d; rimination		
Yajna	_	holy sacrific; of fire		
Yoga	_	linking of finition consciousness with		
7		the Infinite		
Yoga-kshema	-	well-being		
Yoga-bhrasta	-	meditator not yet : clf-realised		
Yogi	_	meditator,		

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